DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 360 433 UD 029 368

AUTHOR Jackson, Gloria D., Ed.
TITLE The Mirror: A Newsletter of Multicultural Children's Literature, 1991-1993.
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 42p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
JOURNAL CIT Mirror: A Newsletter for K-8 Educators; n1-7 Dec 1991-Spr 1993

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS American Indians; *Childrens Literature; Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Differences; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; *Ethnic Groups; *Fiction; *Minority Groups; *Multicultural Education; Newsletters; Nonfiction

ABSTRACT

This document consists of all seven issues that were published of a newsletter devoted to multicultural children's literature that reflects the many cultures in our pluralistic society. The newsletter presents book reviews of fiction and non-fiction with multicultural themes for children in kindergarten through grade 8 schools. Some issues provide brief bibliographies on selected issues, and most issues give a summary list of works reviewed for ready reference. Some of the issues contain feature articles on the following themes: (1) holiday stories; (2) respect for nature in the Native American heritage; (3) ignorance of others brings fear; (4) reflections of a pluralistic society; and (5) multicultural books in the mainstream of children's literature. (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED360433

UD 029 368

The Mirror:

A Newsletter of Multicultural Children's Literature, 1991-1993

Gloria D. Jackson, Ed.

December 1993

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G Jackson.
Mirror

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 Educators

Copies

Multicultural Literature Reflecting a Pluralistic Society

Introductory Issue
December 1991

Created by
Gloria D. Jackson, MLS, MA
Layout/Graphics - Lynn Clark
For permission to copy contact G. Jackson

The purpose of this Newsletter is to present children's literature that reflects the many cultures present in our pluralistic society.

If these books are to be read, by mainstream and minority children, they must be enthusiastically introduced by teachers and librarians.

My goal is to encourage educators to use these books in the schools and so give all children pride in themselves , understanding of others, and increased reading skills.

NEW ***Kwanzaa*** (1991) by A.P. Porter is an easy-reading , how-to-do-it book covering the creation of this festival by Maulana Karenga, its symbols, vocabulary, principles and purpose. The illustrations are attractive and there is a glossary with pronunciation of Swahili words.

Intermediate grade students can read and discuss ***Have a Happy*** .(1989).. by Mildred Pitts Walter, an award winning author. It is a nicely crafted contemporary story woven around the African American festival - Kwanzaa - celebrated after Christmas day. The seven principles are nicely interwoven into the story.

Note should also be taken of *What a Morning; The Christmas Story in Black Spirituals* (1987) by John Langstaff with vibrant illustrations by the noted black artist and author, Ashley Bryan. The words and musical scores for the spirituals are featured alongside the illustrations.

"Students should develop respect for the human dignity of all people and an understanding of different cultures and ways of life" History- Social Science Framework CDOE

Holiday Time !!

A Tree of Cranes (1991) by Allen Say,

Allen Say is a Japanese-American artist and writer. His books span traditional and contemporary stories and his pictures always show careful attention to cultural detail, and have a feeling of space and light. In this elegant picture book a boy tells the story of his first Christmas in Japan. His American mother brings in a little pine tree and decorates it with silver paper cranes and small candles - a remembrance of her past Christmases in California. In this way she shares her customs with her bi-cultural child. A gentle story with pictures of a contemporary yet traditional home in Japan. The little boy may live and dress differently but he has the same excitement about presents as any American child!

K-3

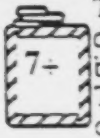
EXTENDED USE - .American students who have spent time in other countries can use this as a model to write stories about how they adapted their Christmas (or other) customs to the culture of their host countries ..or vice versa!

RELATED READING: *Chita's Christmas Tree* (1989)by Elizabeth FitzgeraldHoward. Set in the early 1900s in Baltimore this warm African American Christmas story is a personal remembrance.. Little Chita and her father (a physician) go out to choose a Christmas tree and write her name on it - hoping that Santa Claus will bring it on Christmas Day. Though in picture book format, there are short chapters covering various pre-Christmas activities of Chita, including a scrumptious Christmas Eve family dinner, and finally the Christmas Tree decorated and lighted in the family home on Christmas morning. The pictures glow with warmth, and the red and green accents proclaim the holiday spirit. An exceptionally happy holiday book. (Be sure to read the book jacket explaining the background for the story)***The Silver Whistle*** (1989) by Alice Tompert, is a Christmas story set in Mexico about a boy bringing a gift to the Child during the traditional village ceremonies. Nice story and colorful illustrations. ***The Bell s of Christmas*** (1989) by Virginia Hamilton is a traditional story of Christmas holiday activities a hundred years ago as shown through the eyes of 12-year-old Jason Bell, whose African American family has lived in Ohio since the early 1800s. Older children can read this chapter book alone and appreciate the authentic "period detail " that is evident in the pictures and plot.

K-3

A Christmas Memory (1984) by Truman Capote. Written many years ago this literary gem has been reissued with wonderful illustrations. In it Capote recalls with poignancy a Christmas season when he was seven years old and living in the country with an eccentric old relative. Not sentimental, but certainly a loving tribute. Read it aloud to older children . These books, can make a good comparative study, and English teachers could also add *A Christmas in Wales* (Dylan Thomas) to the discusscion.

NEW- *Picture Bride* (1991) by Yoshiko Uchida . A sensitive and absorbing novel by a well-established Japanese-American author. The story is of young Hana Omiya who leaves Japan to come to California in 1917, holding the picture of the man she has promised to marry - Taro Takeda. The book deals with the harsh realities of Asian immigrant life of the time - the poverty, discrimination - and also with the strength of family and cultural ties.



There is loyalty, tenderness, determination and heartbreak in the story. Hana and Taro have one child - a daughter who elopes with a young American doctor and forsakes her community, just before World War II breaks out. The drama in the story picks up as it relates the tragedies of the "evacuation", when all Japanese Americans in California were sent to internment camps where conditions were unhealthy and inadequate, to say the least. The characters of Taro and Hana are well drawn, and they each react to these changing conditions differently. The subsidiary characters reflect the different faces of Japanese American immigrants of the time, so that there is no stereotyping.

RELATED READING: *A Thousand Pieces of Gold; A Biographical Novel* by Ruthanne Lum McCunn (1981) will allow older students to discuss the similarities in the experiences of young Japanese and Chinese women as immigrants on the West coast around the turn of the . Some students can read *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (1985) by Patricia MacLachlan to learn about American mail-order brides who came out West to marry men, sight unseen. Other books relating to the wartime evacuation of Japanese include Yoshiko Uchida's *Journey to Topaz* (1971)which fictionalizes her experiences as a child in the internment camps and *A Child in Prison Camp* (1971) by Shizue Takashima who tells of the Japanese internment camps in Canada during the war.

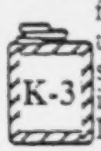
NEW-*At the Crossroads* (1991)by Rachel Isadora Author/ illustrator

Set in the segregated townships of South Africa this picture book focuses on the children eagerly waiting at the crossroads to welcome home their fathers, who have been working in the city for ten months. The ebb and flow of preparation, excitement, disappointment, hope, suspense and final happiness are shown in the pictures of adults and children, their activities and expressions. As night falls and some fathers have still not returned, the bright colors give way to dark skies and shadowy fields, reflecting the somber mood of the few children, still waiting at the crossroads. At last the truck rumbles in and the joyful cry rings out - "Our fathers are home"!

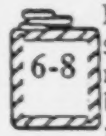
NEW- *First Pink Light* (1991) by Eloise Greenfield. A good companion book, showing a young African American child wanting desperately to stay awake to welcome his father when he comes home at dawn. Even young children will recognize the similarities in the books, and the older children may want to discuss the socio-political differences behind the stories.

It is good to see more books relating to the Hispanic/Latino culture entering the market.

NEW *The Gold Coin* (1991) by Alma Flor Ada is excellent. Though it is an original story (Central America setting) it has the elements of a folktale and can very effectively be used for storytelling. The exquisite illustrations give it the Latino cultural flavor, and certainly enhance the storyline. The story is of Dona Josefa who spends her time willingly helping and healing her neighbors, and of Juan, who pursues her to steal from her. But during the pursuit Juan becomes a changed man, and learns to give rather than take. An outstanding book, by an educator who is knowledgeable and outspoken in her support of bilingual and multicultural education. *Borreguita and the Coyote* (1991) by Verna Aardema is a trickster tale from Mexico with faint echoes of "The Three Billy Goats Gruff". The little lamb avoids being eaten by playing tricks on the coyote and eventually putting him out of the carnivore business! Nice glossary and pronunciation of Spanish terms. Good for informal dramatization and class oral participation. In *Abuela* (1991) by Arthur Borros, Rosalba and her grandmother take an imaginary flying trip over New York City and see the sights from that vantage point! Wonderfully colorful, realistic style pictures of ethnic neighborhoods and inner city communities. Can be used with many of the cross-generational picture books featuring grandparents interacting with children.



NEW -- *Taking Sides* (1991) is a novel by Gary Soto, a Hispanic author who writes honestly and sparsely of life in the central California valley. His stories and poems are carefully crafted with meticulous descriptive details, and yet have a touch of humor and gentle irony as he reveals the joys and fears of young Hispanics coming of age. As such his stories also touch a nerve with all adolescents - boys especially. In this new novel, 14-year-old Lincoln Mendoza moves from the barrio to the suburbs, and herein lies the conflict. As an ace basketball player he will now be playing for his new school against his old school - and his childhood friends. Under this obvious conflict lies the problem of adjusting to a different kind of neighborhood and to the predominantly white school. (A different, yet similar conflict that confronts immigrants to this country.) Who wins in the final play-offs? The resolution in the plot is satisfactory, but unfortunately not through Lincoln's own decision-making. A good exercise would be to have students provide their own endings to the story. Two other books by this author are *Baseball in April* (short stories) and *A Fire in my Hands* (poems). Keep both books for read-aloud when there are spaces of time to fill up.



CREATE A DEMAND FOR MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE -

ASK FOR THESE BOOKS IN LIBRARIES AND BOOKSTORES!

*Aardema, Verna - Borreguita and the Coyote: A
tale from Ayutla, Mexico. (1991) Illus. Petra Mathers. Knopf.
*Ada, Alma Flor - The Gold Coin. (1991) Illus. Neil Waldman., Atheneum
Dorros, Arthur - Abuela (1991) Illus. Elisa Kleven. Dutton
*Greenfield, Eloise - First Pink Light (1991) Illus. Jan S. Gilchrist. Black Butterfly Children's Bks. (c.1976. Harper)
*Hamilton, Virginia - The Bells of Christmas.(1989) Illus. L. Davis, Harcourt
*Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald - Chita's Christmas Tree. (1989) Illus. Floyd Cooper, Bradbury
*Isadora, Rachel - At the Crossroads. (1991) Greenwillow
MacLachlan, Patricia - Sarah, Straight and Tall. (1985) Harper (also in pb - Harper Trophy)
*McCunn, Ruthanne Lum - A Thousand Pieces of Gold: A Biographical Novel. (c1981) In pb (1988) Beacon Pr.
*Porter, A.P., - Kwanzaa. (1991) Pictures by Janice Porter, Carolrhoda
*Say, Allen - Tree of Cranes (1991) Houghton Mifflin
*Takashima, Shizue - A Child in Prison Camp. (1971) Econoclad In pb (1991) Tundra Bks.
*Tate, Eleanora E. - Thank you, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.! (1990)
Watts
Tompert, Alice - The Silver Whistle. (1988) Macmillan
*Uchida, Yoshiko - Journey to Topaz (c 1971) Reprint. Creative Arts Bks.
*Uchida, Yoshiko - Picture Bride. (1991) Northland Pr., Arizona
*Walter, Mildred Pitts - Have a Happy... (1989) Lothrop. Also in pb -Avon

* Ethnic authors pb - paperback

Publication of this multicultural newsletter was announced at the workshops I gave in November 1991 at the California Reading Association conference, and the CMLEA conference. The respons was positive with 70+ signups to receive the publication! The result is this Introductory Issue of THE MIRROR, which is being sent to you free.

I plan to issue THE MIRROR five times during the school year.

During this partial year of 1991-92 - there will be three more issues sent out during January, March, and May 1992. If you wish to receive these three issues please fill in the form below and return it soon, along with six 29 cent stamps to:

Gloria D. Jackson, 45 Moonlit Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95831.

PLEASE PRINT

Your NAME_____ Position _____

Address _____

_____ZIP _____

School _____ Grade level/s_____ __

District _____

COMMENTS:

In this column I shall try and answer questions that you may/will have regarding the content of this Newsletter, and the general topic of Multicultural Literature.

What do you mean by Multicultural Children's Literature? There is no one definition. This Newsletter will consider children's and young adult books that positively and honestly reflect the cultures in our school populations. The emphasis will be on minority ethnic cultures, though books of Anglo-European cultures will be included when appropriate. It will not include books in other languages. It will recommend books that meet the criteria that will be explained in future issues - in this column. Primarily fiction, poetry, biography and picture books will be included under the umbrella of "literature".

Why do you address such a wide spectrum of grades as K - 8?

(1)Since these books are limited - comprising less than 10% of the annual output of children's literature - they need to have more exposure. (2)Besides that, they have multi-uses across the grade levels. Their content can be a starting point for discussions that go far beyond their reading levels. Middle school students should have access to these books through their libraries. Teachers can assign the reading of culturally diverse picture books to younger siblings. Older students can discuss relevant themes of discrimination, assimilation, freedom, cultural traditions and family customs using these books. Teachers can use excerpts from novels to read to younger children. The constant infusion of these books will reinforce the validity of the minority child - to him/herself and others. (3) Mainstream teachers will get an understanding of other cultures by reading all levels of these books.

STAFF RESOURCES

Banks, J.A. (1988) Multiethnic education: Theory and practice (2nd ed.) Rockleigh, NJ Allyn and Bacon

Capote, T. (1984) - A Christmas Memory. Illus. by Beth Peck. Random House

Friere, P. (1968) - Pedagogy of the Oppressed. (Translated by Myra Bergman Romas, 1970) Seabury, NY; Herder and Herder

Rollock, B (1988)- Black authors and illustrators of children's books: A biographical dictionary. New York, Garland Pr.

Schon, I (1988)- A Hispanic Heritage. Series III: A guide to juveniile books about Hispanic people and culture. Metuchen, NJ; Scarecrow Pr.

GLORIA JACKSON has been a librarian in public and school libraries, and an educational administrator for school district libraries. She has been active in giving workshops for teachers and librarians, and in textbook selection and writing curriculum. Her recent research culminated in a Masters Project entitled - Multiethnic Literature in the Elementary School Curriculum - (CSUS/1991). She attended the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Sciences as an Alternate (July 1991). She is now an educational consultant specializing in Multicultural Literature for grades K-8. She will be giving a 1 unit credit course on K-8 Multiethnic Literature on five Saturday mornings-starting Feb. 29, 1992 at California State University, Sacramento.

FUTURE ISSUES

Look for books on the American Indian culture - stories, legends, and how they relate to Ecology. Books relating to the new Asian immigrants. There will be some emphasis on similarities in themes and folktales. New, recent and favorite older books will be reviewed. COMMENTS will include information on ethnic authors, and discussion of criteria for selection of good books.

Let me know what you find most useful, what you would like discussed. We are in this together!!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 Educators

January 1992

Multicultural Literature Reflecting a Pluralistic Society

Created by
Gloria D. Jackson, MLS, MA
Layout/Graphics - Lynn Clark

For permission to copy contact G. Jackson

"I never have seen a man that I thought was better than me. I've seen em who had more money, sure; or more book learnin'; but that don't make him better inside, not by a long shot."
From It's Good To Be Black by Ruby Goodwin.

Self Esteem

Thank you, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr! (1990) by **Eleanora E. Tate.** This delightful novel revolves around Mary Elouise, her African American family, & her friends in the fourth grade. The conflict concerns her reluctance to participate in the Black American History play at school because she lacks self esteem. Her interaction with friends and family bring her to the realisation of her own value. This is an honest story that sensitively explores the lack of self-acceptance in some minority children, and their eventual journey to self esteem. Though the theme is serious, the plot and language abound in humor and reflect the experiences of pre-teens. Recommended for independent reading. Teachers will gain an increased understanding of minority students from this book. Grades 4 - 7

NEW *Amazing Grace* (1991) by **Mary Hoffman** is a picture book about an African American child who has enormous self-esteem and a vivid imagination. Grace likes to act out and "be" all sorts of characters. Her friends think that she has overreached herself when she decides that she wants to be Peter Pan in the school play. But by using, imagination, , she gets the role and does well. The pictures of Grace dance through the pages in a variety of innovative costumes. She is a role model "to be what you want to be". Grades K - 3

Respect for Nature - The Native American Heritage

This we know, The earth does not belong to us. We belong to the earth."

NEW - These words were spoken more than a century ago by Chief Seattle when the American government wanted to move white settlers into the Indian territory and was willing to pay for the land. Jeffers has combined art and poetic text to give us a moving adaptation of this speech.- *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky* : **A message from Chief Seattle by Susan Jeffers (1991)** "How can you buy the sky? How can you own the rain and the wind?" This message is now in the classrooms and courts. The book should be read aloud and discussed in history, science , language arts and speech classes. The poetic text will be good for oral contests and can be easily adapted for choral reading. This is one of the most inspiring and elegant juvenile books in recent years. It epitomizes the legacy of the Native American - reverence for the earth.. Jeffers consulted with members of the Lakota and other tribes Grades 3 - 8 .

NEW - A book that speaks even more directly to the environmental issue is ***Keepers of the Animals; Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children*** (1991) by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac(Abenaki storyteller). This book of 266 pages is definitely a **teacher's resource,** in fact, it has a special Teachers Guide to go along with it. It retells folktales about animals, birds etc. and each of the stories is followed by appropriate science topics (eg. migration, tidal zones, habitat etc); discussions of these topics and activities (art, science, drama, puppets, etc.) to use in the classroom. Use this to put literature in the science curriculum, and introduce scientific concepts dramatically. This book followed the success of the earlier book, ***Keepers of the Animals*** by the same authors.

NEW Another book championing the environmental cause is ***The People Who Hugged the Trees*** (1991). **Deborah Lee Rose** adapted this folktale of Rajasthan which extols the philosophy behind the contemporary Chipko Movement in India, whose members are dedicated to the "conservation...of natural resources." The picture book tells of young Amrita, who lived in a village and loved the trees, frequently hugging them. When a group of laborers come to cut down the trees. Amrita is outraged and mobilizes the villagers to hug each tree to prevent them being cut down. The Maharajah is summoned to deal with this defiance, but just as he orders the laborers to continue, a mighty sandstorm occurs. When it subsides it is found that though there is extensive damage in the area the village and its well water has been saved because it was protected by the barrier of trees. The Maharajah gets the message - as your students will. Lovely water colors on each page, with authentic cultural details. Gr. 1-3

****** Though there is only a very small percent of Native American children in our school populations, the books from this culture have value because of their strong environmental message, their inclusion in the curriculum and also because this culture, in a sense , is the heritage of all of us who now call ourselves Americans. ********

Related Reading A recent useful series is the NATIVE AMERICAN LEGENDS . Though these are formula books-same author and format, they have some special values. Each book recognizes and deals with a particular Indian nation,; retells its folktales , depicts its crafts, symbols etc. and then devotes 13 of the 47 pages to factual , historical and contemporary information on that nation - including maps and photographs. Though the folktale illustrations are colorful, they are stylised and faceless. These books were favorably reviewed by a Native American Resource teacher.

MORE NEW BOOKS

The sudden influx of Russian refugees and has given rise to an interest in books on this culture. *Sorochintzy Fair* (1991)is a fanciful tale of the Ukraine. It is an early work of Nikolai Gogol .The story has been translated and adapted, and the illustrations impart a unique Russian cultural flavor.It is the story of young Paraska, whose parents oppose her marriage to the man she meets at the Fair. There is a contract with a gypsy, an episode of the devil's visit and a magical resolution of all conflicts! Grades 1-3

A Song of the Stars; an Asian Legend (1991) by Tom Birdseye offers an explanation for the Chinese Festival called Chi Hsi (Festival of the Milky Way;) This romantic legend of star-crossed lovers is enriched by the iridescent, stylised illustration s that look like exquisite stained glass. Grades 1-3

How the Ox Star Fell from Heaven(1991) by Lily Toy Hong. The village people in China were always hungry, so the Emperor of All the Heavens decreed that they should eat "at least once every three days." He sent his trusted messenger, the not-very-smart Ox Star down to earth to give this message. What the Ox Star said was slighly different - "The Emperor has declared that you shall eat three times a day, every day"! The people were happy, but the Emperor was not! And he banished the Ox to earth to be a beast of burden . The illustrations are stylised, full of rich colors and almost all are double page spreads. Because of the style there may be some criticism of stereotype, but children should be told this is sheer fantasy - not reality. Kids love it. Gr.K-2

You'll love *Everybody Cooks Rice* (1991)by Norah Dooley. A young girl visits down the street at supper time looking for her brother, and in the process tastes rice dishes from Barbados, India, Puerto Rico, China, Haiti and Vietnam. The book is colorfully, and realistically illustrated. Recipes for the rice dishes are given at the back. An excellent book to show the commonalities in cultures. Gr. 1 - 7

No culture...retains its identity in isolation; identity is attained in contact, in contrast, in breakthrough. Carlos Fuentes - "How I started to Write" ; In Graywolf Annual Five Multicultural Literacy

Famous People of Many Cultures

February is frequently the time students in elementary and middle schools are assigned to read and report on biographies of famous people. Here is an unusual collection of picture books that span all grades and are particularly appropriate for heterogeneous classes. Older students can do research in encyclopedias etc. to back up the short text, adding dates, maps, and other details to written or oral reports. These colorful books are a good introduction to biographies.

NEW...*Chingis Khan* (1991) written and illustrated by Demi is a sophisticated picture book . .The illustrations are like a series of miniature Mogul paintings set on cool white walls that enhance their gilt frames and frequent gold accents. The text is simple but primarily factual, relating the life of this 12th century military genius(also spelled Genghis) from his childhood on the arid plains of Mongolia, into the trials and adventures of manhood, and the eventual creation of a massive war machine that was to conquer most of Persia, Hungary, Poland, Russia and China and make him "one of the greatest conquerors in history". Grades 4 - 7

NEW...*The Last Princess; The story of Princess Kaiulani of Hawaii* (1991)by Fay Stanley is another biographical picture book that is written for older children. It is a sad story of the betrayal of the Hawaiian people by the "haoles" (foreigners) during the 1890s. The first few pages read like a fairy tale-a beautiful princess growing up in plush surroundings. But then the reader learns of the conspiracy to annex the islands to the US; the sudden death of the king; the abortive native revolt; the dethronement and imprisonment of Queen Liliuokalani. Kaiulani has been sent to school in England, but she returns to go to Washington to intercede for her people. President Coolidge,though sympathetic, is unable or unwilling to curb the greed of the white settlers. (Some parallels to the fate of Native Americans.) The story is dramatic and emotional. Kaiulani emerges as an intelligent and courageous young woman. Gr.4-7

Related reading: *Shaka: King of the Zulus* (1988) by Diane Stanley and Peter Vennema is a picture-book biography of another military genius, who "took a handful of Zulu fighters and turned them into an army of the finest warriors in Africa" during the early 1800s. Grades 4 - 7

Diane Stanley is also the author/illustrator of the award winning picture book, *Peter the Great (1986*)about another military genius who dominated Russian history in the early 1800s .Gr.4-7

I wish there were as many books about great men and women of peace. *The Wheel of King Asoka* (1977) by Ashok Davar, is currently out of print but may be on some library shelves.It is a simple picture book about an Emperor in Ancient India about 3rd century BC. After seeing the devastation wrought by his conquering armies Asoka proclaimed and followed a policy of non-violence, and governed by the philosophy that "justice, peace and love must go on." A *Man Called Thoreau* (1985) by Robert Burleigh is another short and easy book that is beautifully written, with serene illustrations evocative of the man and his philosophy (which is explained in simple language). This title will also fit in well with the environmental theme.Gr.4-7

Did you know there was a famous matador in Spain who was a Chinese-American ? His real name was Bong Way "Billy" Wong, and Allen Say has told his unusual story in the picture book, *El Chino* (1990). The first half of the book has sepia, photographic-like pictures with sparse facts. Billy, the son of Chinese immigrants grows up in Arizona influenced by his father's belief that in America you can be anything you want to be! Billy wants to be a basketball star, but though he is an excellent athlete - he is too short. So he becomes an engineer. He visits Spain on vacation, and his ambition changes, as does the mood of the text and the illustrations ,which burst into color. He perseveres against considerable odds but does eventually emerge as the very first Chinese bullfighter in Spain. This story crosses cultural boundaries and is filled with the power of possibilities. I found it exciting. Older students might try to research further details of this interesting man. Gr. 3-7

Introduce these books to teachers and students

Titles mentioned in this Newsletter have buying information here.Prices have not been added since they can vary. Some additional titles have been added as space permitted. *Ethnic authors

Amazing Grace by *Mary Hoffman. 1991 Dial Bks. ISBN 0-8037-1040-2
Brother Eagle, Sister Sky; A Message from Chief Seattle by Susan Jeffers. 1991. Dial Bks ISBN 0-8037-0963-3
Chingis Khan by Demi. 1991 Holt ISBN 0=8050-1708-9
El Chino by *Allen Say 1990 Houghton ISBN0-395-52028-1
Everybody Cooks Rice by Norah Dooley. Illus/Peter Thornton Carolrhoda ISBN 0-397-32179-1
His Majesty, Queen Hatshepsut by Dorothy Carter. 1987 Harper ISBN 0-397-32179-1 Gr. 6-8
How the Ox Star Fell from Heaven by *Lily Toy Hong. 1991 Albert Whitman Pub. ISBN 0-8075-3428-5
The Last Princess; The story of Princess Kaiulani of Hawaii by Fay Stanley. Illus. by Diane Stanley 1991 Macmillan/Four Winds ISBN 0-02-786785-4
A Man called Thoreau by Robert Burleigh 1985 ISBN 0-689-31122-2
The People Who Hugged the Trees adapted by Deborah Lee Rose with pictures by Birgitta Saflund. 1990 Roberts Rinehart, Niwot, Colorado. ISBN 0-911797-80-7
Peter the Great by Diane Stanley. 1986 Morrow ISBN 0-02786790-0
Shaka: King of the Zulus by Diane Stanley. 1988 Morrow ISBN 0-68807343-3
Sorochintzy Fair by *Nikolai Gogol Illus/Gennadij Spirin. 1991 David Godine Pub. ISBN 0-87923-879-8
*Thank you Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** by Eleanora Tate 1990 Watts ISBN 0-531-15151-4
The Wheel of King Asoka by *Ashok Davar 1977 Follett Not in print.

SERIES
NATIVE AMERICAN LEGENDS. Author Terri Cohlene. Troll Assoc. 6 bks gr. 4-8 Set in lib bdg - $89.70 ISBN 0-86593-000-7 Also available in paperback - Watermill Pr. *Clamshell Boy* (Makah); *Dancing Drum* (Cherokee); *Ka-Ha-Si and the Loon* (Eskimo); *Little Firefly* (Algonquin)
Easy reading biographies by **Jeri Ferris.** Carolrhoda Pr. Gr. 3-5 (ESL Gr.5-8)
Arctic Explorer; The Story of Matthew Henson. 1989
Go Free or Die; Story about Harriet Tubman 1988
Native American Doctor; The Story of Susan La Flesche Picotte. 1991
Walking the Road to Freedom; A Story about Sojourner Truth. 1988
What are you figurin' now? A story about Benjamin Banneker. 1988

Teacher Resources

Books without Bias; Through Indian eyes. Edited by *B. Slapin and *D. Seale. 1989 Oyate Pubs., 2702 Matthews St., Berkeley, CA 94702. 462pp Spiral bdg. $25.00 ISBN 1-55591-027-0 $19.95 Teachers Guide - $9.95 (Reviews and Evaluates Native American children's books)
Graywolf Five: Multicultural Literacy; Opening the American Mind edited by Rick Simonson and Scott Walker. 1988 Graywolf Pr. St. Paul, MN
It's Good To Be Black by Ruby Goodwin, pb 1976 Southern Illinois U. Pr.
Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children by Michael J. Caduto and *Joseph Bruchac. 1991 Fulcrum Pub., 350 Indiana St., Golden, Colorado 80401
Keepers of the Earth; Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children. By Michael Caduto and *Joseph Bruchac. 1988 Fulcrum Pub. ISBN 1-55591-027-0 $19.95 Teachers Guide $9.95

Hook Middle School students on Biographical Fiction or Fictional Biography. Let them read, then research the facts!
***I, Juan de Pareja* by Elizabeth Borten de Trevino. 1965. Newbery Winner. Econoclad. Cross cultural. Velazquez, Spanish painter.**
***Anthony Burns; the Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave.* by Virginia Hamilton. 1988 Knopf**
***The Secret Life of Pocahontas* by Jean Fritz**

FUTURE ISSUES - Themes will include Journey to Freedom; Comparative Folktales; Overcoming Prejudice, Hold fast the Dream. Do you have other suggestions?

My daughter, the layout artist, generously gifted me with the new address label that I hoped you noticed on your envelope! A thousand labels! I am, therefore, committed to this Newsletter for some time to come! So, please get the word out! Interested librarians, teachers and parents can receive this issue and the subsequent March and May issues if they -
Send their name/address and six 29 cents stamps to - THE MIRROR,
45 Moonlit Circle, Sacramento, CA 95831

Name _____ Position _____

Address (with ZIP) _____

_____

School _____ Gr:_____ District _____

Questions and Comments

I am appreciative of the response to the Introductory Issue, and have taken into account some of your suggestions. I invite readers to send in comments and suggestions. We are in this together, to enrich reading and promote understanding.

Should culturally diverse books be equally represented, or represented in proportion to the minorities present in a school population? No. For many reasons. (1) These books are not published in proportion to the current demographics. There are many more books, reflecting the African American culture because this literature started being published earlier,during the push for Civil Rights in the 1960s. (2) A variety of multiethnic literature should be available to all minority and mainstream students to promote understanding. (3)Books about minority cultures have many themes in common, and their appeal can and should be across cultures. (4) Many award-winning minority-culture books merit a place in libraries and classrooms just because they are superior literature.

It is most important that MANY books from MANY cultures be introduced and available to MANY students and teachers, to avoid creating stereotypes.

Criteria for multiethnic children's literature.

(1) Consider the ethnicity and/or authority of the author. Ethnic authors are sensitive to and knowledgeable about their own cultures. Mainstream authors should show the research and experience that backs their writing /illustrating of these books. Read the book jacket blurbs for author information.

(2) Know the date of original or reprint publication. Cultural sensitivity has gradually emerged only after the late 1960s. Books published prior to this date should be examined more carefully for patronising or denigrating attitudes and content.

(3) Watch for stereotyping in characterization, setting, illustrations and language.

(4) Examine the plot/content to ensure the veracity of historical and cultural information and attitude.

(5) Look for culturally relevant and/or universal themes.

(6) These books should of course, also meet the guidelines for appropriate and worthwhile children's literature.

The overriding criterion is that these books present a positive picture of the culture depicted. They should help to reinforce the self esteem of minority children, and encourage interest and respect from all children and teachers.

"Children, not yet aware that it is dangerous to look too deeply at anything, look at everything, look at each other, and draw their own conclusions." James Baldwin

GLORIA JACKSON has been a school librarian and library administrator during the last 17 years. Her recent research culminated in a written Masters Project - *Multiethnic Literature in the Elementary School Curriculum* (CSUS/1991). Currently she is an educational consultant presenting workshops on this topic.

The purpose of this Newsletter is to present children's literature that reflects the many cultures present in our pluralistic society.

In order for these books to reach both minority and mainstream students, they must be introduced enthusiastically by teachers and librarians.

My goal is to provide information to educators so that they will use these books with students, and so give all children pride in themselves and increased respect for other cultures.

COURSES & CONFERENCES

Gloria Jackson will give a course on

Multiethnic Literature K-8

One Graduate Credit Unit - $90.00
Saturdays, 9 - 12 noon
February 29 - Mar 28, 1992
Calif. State Univ. Sacramento
Call her at 916/417-1956 for further information.

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 Educators

March 1992

No. 3

Multicultural Literature Reflecting a Pluralistic Society

Editor: Gloria D. Jackson

Layout/Graphic: Lynn Clark

Copyright : For permission for one-time copying, or district distribution, contact:

Editor, Mirror

45 Moonlit Circle

Scaramento, CA 95831

The Purpose of this Newsletter is to present new and recent multiethnic books .It is hoped that the reviews,activities and related readings will encourage teachers and librarians to enthusiastically introduce these books to students, and use them in the classroom.

Reviewed in this Issue

K-4

All Night, All Day / Bryan*

Baba Yaga; A Russian Folktale by Kimmel

Big Mama / Crews*

Here Comes the Cat / Asch and Koshkin*

Nathaniel Talking / Greenfield*

Pedro and the Padre / Aardema*

Pueblo Storyteller / Hoyt- Goldsmith

Tar Beach / Ringgold*

Vasilissa the Beautiful / Winthrop

The Woman who Outshone the Sun by Martinez*

Gr. 5 - 8

A Boat to Nowhere / Wartski

Children of the River / Crew

Here Comes the Cat / Asch

I Have A Dream / * USGPO

Maniac Magee / Spinelli

The Mouse Rap / Myers*

A Summer Life / Soto*

The Year of the Impossible Goodbyes / Choi*

Resource Books:

The Multicolored Mirror/CCBC

* - Ethnic authors/illustrators

— Grade Levels can be flexible depending on student ability and teacher usage

Ignorance Breeds Fear

"But the East Enders stayed in the East and the West Enders stayed in the West, and the less they knew about each other the more they invented!"
***Maniac Magee* / Spinelli**

MANIAC MAGEE by Jerry Spinelli
1990 Little, Brown & Co.
ISBN 0-316-80722-2 Gr. 6-8+

This Newbery Award book is a story about teenage bravado - both white and black; about homelessness of the young and alone-ness of the old; about sports; about families, loving or cruelly dysfunctional; about looking out for yourself and others.

It is a Tall Tale - of the exaggerated strength and unusual humanity of teenage Jeffrey Lionel Magee He's John Henry overcoming the odds and Galahad searching for the Grail.They call him a Maniac!The other characters serve the story and its theme - and are either very good or very bad! But they are always interesting.

It is an Allegory of the Lion sitting down with the Lamb and sharing its food. If the current philosophy of multi-culturalism promotes honest confrontation as the way to understanding, then this is the book to take the message to kids of all colors. A runaway white teenager from the West End (Maniac), arrives in an East End black neighborhood, withstands challenges, enjoys hospitality, sees beyond skin color and tries to spread this message of understanding to others - with varying success.Weaving through the staccato sentences, pithy paragraphs and exciting exploits is the message that ignorance breeds fear and knowledge fosters understanding.

HERE COMES THE CAT by Frank Asch & Vladimir Vagin(artist) Scholastic 1989 ISBN 0-590-41859-9 Gr.1 - 4+

Before Boris Yeltsin became a household name, and the fear of the red menace had receded -this almost-wordless picture book was designed and illustrated by an American / Russian collaboration. The brightly colored pictures have white bubbles with the message - "Here comes the cat "- in both English and Russian. These words of alarm are carried by an alert mouse who enters each picture interrupting the activities of mice-people at play and at work,and is soon followed by an anxious army of mice.Then a monstrous shadow of a cat's head appears which is followed by a gigantic but docile cat bearing a wagon on which is an enormous slab of cheese for the mice!

ACTIVITIES;

Learn the simple Russian words (pronunciation given), discuss the theme, write the story, create a bilingual picture book. Older students can discuss the symbolism, genre, and relevance to current events; create their own fables, parables or allegories. Compare with *THE TERRIBLE THINGS* / Bunting

Some book ACTIVITIES have been suggested because multiethnic books need to be actively infused into the curriculum. ***Librarians and teachers can work together to initiate, support and implement these or other activities.***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Old Stories and the Storyteller

VASILISSA THE BEAUTIFUL. A Russian folktale adapted by Elisabeth Winthrop Illustrated by Alexander Koshkin. HarperCollins Pub. 1991 ISBN 0-06—21662-X $15.89 Gr. 1-4

It is good to see another Russian/ American collaboration in the retelling of the this traditional Russian folktale. This is great for Storytelling. It has many familiar folktale motifs- like the wicked stepmother; absent father; ill-treated stepchild; dangerous forest; magic object; impossible tasks; handsome ruler who marries virtuous stepdaughter - all woven together in a story with a nice element of suspense, and enough new twists to keep the attention of any kids!. The culture-specific element is Baba Yaga , as omnipresent in Russian stories as Anansi is in African tales. Baba Yaga is usually an ugly hag/witch who flies around in a mortar and threatens to eat people.

The illustrations, are plentiful, colorful, and show traditional Russian costumes. The notes at the end have good information on the story roots and the Baba Yaga motif; as well as on the Russian illustrator. This book is a winner!

BABA YAGA; A RUSSIAN FOLKTALE retold by Eric A. Kimmel Illustrated by Megan Lloyd. Holiday House 1991 ISBN 0-8234-0854-X Gr.1 - 3

Add this to your list of must-have picture books. The traditional Cinderella motif takes a twist here in that the ill-treated, good stepchild, Marina, is not beautiful, but has an ugly horn growing out of her forehead, and she has only one jealous stepsister. By being kind, Marina not only escapes being eaten by Baba Yaga, but her horn is removed and placed instead on the forehead of the greedy sister. Of course there is more to the story, but the humorous illustrations and slight twist to the plot lend an air of irony to a traditional theme. Good for storytelling.

PEDRO AND THE PADRE : An Ancient Mexican Tale by Verna Aardema Illus. by Friso Henstra Dial 1991 ISBN 0-8037-0523-9 Gr. K-3

A trickster tale about a young Mexican boy who is lazy and uses many excuses but who gets his comeuppance eventually and is forgiven by the Padre. A delightful picture book with humorous but positive illustrations. Though sombreros are plentiful, I was pleased to notice there were also some other kinds of hats shown. Good for storytelling.

ACTIVITIES:
Read *THE BOY OF THE THREE-YEAR NAP* / Allen Say, Compare and contrast. the two lazy protagonists. Tell stories of other Tricksters - Coyote (American Indian), Anansi and Brer Rabbit (African American)

THE WOMAN WHO OUTSHONE THE SUN: The legend of Lucia Zenteno. From a Poem by Alejandro Cruz Martinez. Illus. Fernando Olivera. Children's Book Press 1991
ISBN 0-89239-101-4 Gr. 1-4

There is a legend from the Zapotec Indians of Oaxaco, Mexico about a Lucia Zenteno, the beautiful stranger with such long, lustrous hair that when she went down to the river to bathe, the fish loved to play in it. Lucia understood nature and had magical powers that the villagers did not understand. So they were afraid and sent her from their village. But the river went with her and there was drought. The villagers apologised and she brought the river back again to bless them. But Lucia disappeared and only left her spirit to help them "live with love and understanding." Lustrous illustrations give a non-European norm to feminine beauty. The last page of the book has the story of the tragic death of the poet/author. Bilingual/Spanish

PUEBLO STORYTELLER by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith. Photographs by Lawrence Migdale Holiday House 1991 $14.95 ISBN 0-8234-0864-7 Gr. 2-8

The photographs in this factual book are culture-specific and show activities engaged in by young April and her grandparents in the Cochiti pueblo near Santa Fe, New Mexico - making and baking bread, molding a traditional "Pueblo storyteller" pottery figure, and learning the Buffalo dance. The whole book is so seamlessly constructed it reads like literature, and it also includes the Pueblo legend , "How the People Came to Earth". Pronunciations of Indian words and terms are given in the text. A glossary of definitions and an index are added.

ACTIVITIES:
The descriptions of cooking, pottery making, dance, encourage replication in a classroom.

TAR BEACH by Faith Ringgold author/artist Crown Pubs. 1991 ISBN 0-517-58030-4 lib bdg Gr. K-2

TAR BEACH by Faith Ringgold author/artist Crown Pubs. 1991 ISBN 0-517-58030-4 lib bdg Gr. K-2

This 1992 **Caldecott Honor** picture book depicts the imaginative journey of young Cassie, flying over her favorite spots in New York - Washington Bridge, Tar Beach, and the apartment rooftop where her African American family plays cards on warm nights and the children sleep out under the stars.

ACTIVITIES: Compare with the 1992 Caldecott Award - *TUESDAY* by David Weisner (frogs flying away on lily pads) and *ABUELA* by Arthur Dorros 1991

"...just as the river gives water to all who are thirsty, no matter who they are, so you must learn to treat everyone with kindness, even those who seem different from you." ***The Woman Who Outshone the Sun***

Rap, Rhythm and Remembrance

THE MOUSE RAP by Walter Dean Myers. Harper 1990
ISBN 0-06-024343-0 Gr. 6-8+

The Mouse is a smart and confident 14-yr-old who loves to rap. He lives in Harlem with his mother, and hangs around with a clique of three boys and three girls. This is their story, and it is too long to condense into a few sentences! Enough to say that it describes family and friend relationships, teenage challenges, and hunting for Tiger Moran's stolen loot in the city. There is humor, suspense, nice characterization, good story and a rap poem to introduce each chapter. The dialogue and descriptions are colorful and clean.. Great READALOUD.

ACTIVITIES:
-Small group - Introduce the Mouse to the Maniac, and create a dialogue between them. Act it out.

You've heard my story, you've dug my show
You've rapped the rhythm and felt the flow
But now it's time for The Mouse to split
'Cause the tale is ended when the pieces fit.

NATHANIEL TALKING by Eloise Greenfield. Illus Jan Spivey Gilchrist. Writers and Readers Publishing Inc. Black Butterfly Children's Bks..NY 1988
ISBN 0-86316-200-2 Gr. 2-5

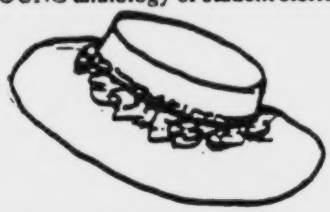
The reader shares nine-year old Nathaniel's happy and sad experiences through his talking - -which ranges from infectious rap to quieter blank verse poems, and culminating in some twelve-bar-blues lyrics. Spivey's lovely studies of Nathaniel make him real.At the end of the book the African American, award-winning author explains the structure of the 12-bar-blues lyric.

ACTIVITIES:
Compare cultural poetic styles
Model for drawing self portraits

A SUMMER LIFE by Gary Soto
Dell paperback, 1990
ISBN 0-440-21024-0 Gr. 5-9

This author has an observant eye, an amazing memory and a pen that illuminates unnoticed scenes and unimportant episodes to make them memorable. The thirty-nine brief essays (two or three pages each) are deceptively simple yet crafted with artistry. Soto's loving but unsentimental tributes to his childhood in a Latino community in Fresno, are always honest and positive, frequently funny and never trite. Teachers should keep the book at hand for quick and enjoyable" **readalouds"** in the class.(Or for their own relaxation!)

ACTIVITIES:
Use for analysis, modelling of creative writing; and telling family stories. Class project - WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG anthology of student stories!



ALL NIGHT, ALL DAY; A Child's First Book of African-American Spirituals. Selected and Illustrated by Ashley Bryan. Atheneum 1991 ISBN 0-689-31662-3
All grades
Coretta Scott King award.

Luminous paintings illustrate this latest collection of spirituals. It has been Ashley's mission to bring into print some of the hundreds of spirituals that are being lost, or appropriated by other musical genres, This indigenous music reflects the faith, courage, and joy of the African American heritage.

BIG MAMA'S by Donald Crews. Greenwillow Bks., 1991 ISBN 0688-09951-3 Gr. K-2

The author/artist paints his memories of summer trips to Grandma's house when he was young.We follow the four children and mother as they take the train to Cottondale, greet the grandparents, run excitedly through the rooms and out into the yard, stable etc. to make sure everything is the same as the year before. The last page shows a self portrait of the artist as he looks out at the skyscrapers silhouetted against the night sky. "Some nights, even now, I think that I might wake up in the morning and be at Bigmama's with the whole summer ahead of me."There is a pleasing predominance of shades of brown as well as many primary colors that make the illustrations active and attractive. A book that extols the sense of family and heritage in the black community.

AUNT FLOSSIE'S HATS (AND CRAB CAKES LATER) by Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard. Paintings by James Ransome. Clarion Bks. 1991
ISBN 0-395-54682-6 K-2

A happy book of memories,with realistic paintings of the young African American girls - Sarah and Susan, their attractive, mature Aunt Flossie and her comfortable home. And of course, the hats - of many colors, emanating from chintz-covered hatboxes. The girls love trying on the hats and hearing Aunt Flossie tell stories about them. Their favorite is the time her best Sunday hat flew off, fell in the river and had to be rescued by a dog! After such an experience she went for crab cakes - and that is what they do again in the book. "Crab cakes taste best after stories...about Aunt Flossie's hats"

I HAVE A DREAM; A Collection of Black Americans on U.S. Postage Stamps.
Published by the U.S. Postal Service. 1991 17.95
A beautiful album of 28 portraits of distinguished African Americans painted by Thomas Blackshear for U.S. postage stamps. Each full-page color portrait has a biographical sketch on the facing page. The book comes with a set of stamps. The portraits are back-to-back and the binding is not reinforced. Good for DISPLAY and REFERENCE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Escape from Fear... Journey to Freedom

THE YEAR OF IMPOSSIBLE GOODBYES by Sook Nyul Choi. Houghton 1991 ISBN 0-395-57419-6 Gr. 7-8+

This harrowing tale of oppression, survival and eventual escape,is told by 10-year-old Sookun, who lives with her family in North Korea during the 1940s.The first chapters relate the degrading conditions of their life under the Japanese occupation.The overlords are vicious in their demands and punishments - There is a brief, poignant description of a simple birthday party, but even that has a tragic end. In 1945, the Japanese leave but the Russians arrive with a totalitarian regime that becomes as onerous. The last three chapters have good suspense in describing the escape of Sookun and her younger brother to the South.They are left alone to endure hunger, pain, cold and risk as they make the dangerous journey to freedom and eventually scramble under the barbed wire marking the 38th parallel, and so reach safety.. The story, rooted in the experiences of the author, fosters respect for the Koreans, and empathy for their sufferings.It's description of the Japanese occupying forces has many parallels with Nazi oppression in World War II Europe.

"There was one of two things I had a right to, Liberty or Death. If I could not have one, I would have the other, for no man should take me alive" *Harriet Tubman*

If you are not already a subscriber and wish to receive the final issue- (May-#4) or the preceding issues -(Introductory-#1, January-#2, March-#3.), send your name, address and two 29 cents stamps for each issue requested to -
The MIRROR, 45 Moonlit Circle, Sacramento, CA 95831

CHILDREN OF THE RIVER by Linda Crew. Delacorte 1989, Dell paperback 1991 ISBN 0-440-21022 Gr.6-9+

A well-written romance about a young Cambodian refugee in a Corvallis high school and how she confronts the culture conflict and growing love between herself and the outstanding school athlete. In flashback it describes her desperate escape from Cambodia on an overloaded freighter which is not equipped with enough shelter, food or medical aid for the hundreds of refugees aboard. There is discomfort, disease and death. How Sundara deals with these memories and exorcises the guilt she feels, is part of the plot, and well resolved.
The author sympathetically describes cultural conventions and cross-cultural communications.She acknowledges the help of many local Cambodians.

A BOAT TO NOWHERE by Maureen Crane Wartski. Westminster 1980 New American Lib. .1981 Only paperback. ISBN 0-451-16285-4 Gr.6-8

If you missed this in hardback the paperback is available.This is a truly adventurous tale about the courage and perseverance of a family of "boat people" escaping from the Viet Cong in a small fishing vessel that doesn't even have a compass! It is a compelling story of devastating storms, desperate measures, lack of food,sickness , death and eventual rescue and freedom. Great readaloud !

COMMENTS

Even though funds are being cut there is a high priority for serving the needs of our multiethnic student population. Now is the time of ask for monies through district budgets or special grants to purchase good MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE that can

-- provide reading that is relevant to the diverse student populations and as such increase self esteem and reading motivation (especially in at-risk students)

-- positively reflect a variety of cultures and so foster understanding, balance negative personal experiences and improve school climate

-- support and enrich the curriculum with information on minority contributions to American history

-- satisfy the Framework's mandate for well-written , age-appropriate literature that explores worthwhile themes.

RESOURCES

The Multicolored Mirror; Cultural Substance in Literature for Young Adults. Edited by Merri Lindgren, Cooperative Children's Book Center. 1991 Highsmith Press, P.O.Box 800, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin 53538-0800 Paperback ISBN 0-917846-05-2 $19.75

This reference 'gem' contains the speeches, papers and panel discussion given at the Conference of the same name held in Wisconsin in 1991, plus a bibliography of 101 recommended multicultural books. The presenters are well-known in this field - Rudine Sims Bishop, Tom Feelings, Elizabeth Howard, Walter Dean Myers, Doris Seale, George Ancona.
It is very well written and includes good information on the history of these books, their evaluation, illustration, value for the child, and publication. Don't miss this!

" *Story* is a universal mirror that shows us the *truth* about ourselves...Inside *story* we can accept pain, find justice, and experience exaltation... *Story* defines humanity"
Storytelling by Livo (1986)

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 Educators

May 1992

No. 4

Multicultural Literature Reflecting a Pluralistic Society

Editor: Gloria D. Jackson
Layout/Graphics: Lynn Clark

Copyright 1991

Subscription form enclosed

The purpose of this Newsletter is to present new and recent multiethnic books. It is hoped that the reviews and activities will encourage teachers and librarians to enthusiastically introduce these books to students and to use them in the classroom.

Reviewed in the Issue

Dragonfly's Tale / Rodanas [K-3]
Hoang Anh, A Vietnamese American Boy / Hoyt-Goldsmith [3-8]
How My Family Lives in America / Kuklin [1-4]
Invisible Thread / Uchida* [5-8+]
Little Brother / Baillie [5-8+]
Lost Garden / Yep* [5-8+]
Most Beautiful Place in the World / Cameron [3-5]
Night on Neighborhood Street / Greenfield* [K-3]
Roses Sing on New Snow / Yee* [K-5]
Steal Away / Armstrong
Year They Walked / Siegel [5-8]

References
I Shall Not Be Moved / Angelou*
Multicolored Mirror / Lindgren
School Library Journal Jan. 1992

* Ethnic authors
[-] Grade levels - can be flexible

You have tried to destroy
me
and though I perish daily,

I shall not be moved.

When you learn, teach
When you get, give.
As for me,

I shall not be moved.

Maya Angelou-*I Shall Not Be Moved*

THE YEAR THEY WALKED; Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Beatrice Siegel Four Winds Pr. 1992 ISBN 0-02-782631-7 $13.95 Gr. 5-8

Rosa Parks, a modest black woman, was the catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement of the sixties. Though this is not a biography it gives background information and explains her growing political awareness that resulted in her refusal to give up her seat on the bus to a white man.

The book follows the ensuing bus boycott from its first uncertain days, through its gathering strength and final victory when the Supreme Court declared the segregation laws of Alabama to be illegal. This is a dramatic story of an aroused minority wielding power through non-violence, careful organization and plodding perseverance. They were inspired by the rallying cries of Martin Luther King, Jr who rose to prominence as their charismatic leader. This well-written book, with accompanying photographs, concludes with information on the life, work and recognition of Ms. Parks after these events and to this day.

CURRICULUM: U.S. History

ROSES SING ON A NEW SNOW: A Delicious Tale by Paul Yee, Illustrated by Harvey Chan. Macmillan 1991 ISBN 0-02-793622-8 $13.95 Gr. K-5

In this realistic little tale set in the New World at the turn of the century we meet Maylin who cooked delicious food for her father's restaurant in Chinatown-but the credit was given to her two "fat and lazy" brothers. When the Governor of South China visits Chinatown, Maylin prepares a delectable dish for him which is so good that the Governor wishes to meet the cook and learn how to make it. Read the book to find out what happens next! This is not a 'fairy-tale' ending and has a nice touch of humor, realism and poetic justice! A refreshing story. Its theme has multicultural implications. "Even with common basics there are unique differences that must be acknowledged." The illustrations dance right along with the plot and the expressions on the faces of the characters are almost a story in themselves!

ACTIVITIES: Predict an ending. Discuss the role of women. Discuss commonalities and differences in cultural foods. Tie in with *Everybody Cooks Rice* (MIRROR#2)

"..although it is important for each of us to cherish our own special heritage,
I believe,
above everything else,
we must all celebrate our common humanity."

Yoshiko Uchida

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Who am I, Really ?

THE INVISIBLE THREAD: an autobiography by Yoshiko Uchida. Messner Pubs. 1991 ISBN 0-671-74163-2 Gr. 5-8+

THE LOST GARDEN: A Memoir by Laurence Yep. Messner 1991 ISBN 0-671-74159-4 Gr. 5-8+

A strong theme running through multicultural literature is self identification (which is different from self esteem). The first step in understanding the "hyphenated-American" is to be sensitive to the dichotomy and/or culture conflict that exists within such persons. It is interesting to know that these two authors, whose books have done much for the self-identification of Asian American children, had their own problems of identification.

For most of her life YOSHIKO wondered "What was I, anyway?" As a child, she absolutely refused to learn to read and write Japanese, and visiting in Japan as a child she felt like a foreigner..."But the sad truth was, in America too, I was perceived as a foreigner". So - "I wasn't really totally American, and I wasn't totally Japanese. I was a mixture...and could never be anything else." It wasn't until she visited Japan as a young woman, that "things began to turn around [and] I understood who I really was."

"In my neighborhood I had grown up thinking that I was as American as all the other children" Laurence Yep

YEP says- "It took me years to realize that I was Chinese whether I wanted to be or not. And it was something I had to learn to accept to know its strengths and understand its weaknesses." Both authors grew up before the sixties and the ethnic pride movement. "In the 1950s,few people wanted to be strange and different",writes Yep. But even now, those citizens outside the American dream - whether through race, color, or economics - cry out, "Who am I? Where do I fit in? Do I have worth?"

These autobiographies give excellent insights into the lives, families and writings of these two authors, and will get you rereading their books.

Neighborhoods

"In some damaged families, books about people who love each other may be a child's only lifeline to the future." Ann Cameron

NIGHT ON NEIGHBORHOOD STREET by Eloise Greenfield, Illus. by Jan Spivey Gilchrist. Dial NY 1991 ISBN 0-8037-0778-9 Gr. K-3

The short , realistic poems and reassuring illustrations help to remind us that in a world of erupting violence there are still loving families worshipping together and nurturing their children. There still are neighborhoods where children play street games together in safety,and adults work out problems at meetings. The simple words, and lyrical phrases remind us of a child afraid of the night, and young men resolutely turning away from *"The Seller"*. That the colorful and positive illustrations feature African Americans give the book added power but don't limit its appeal. Once again Eloise Greenfield has given us a "family time" book of hope and beauty.

ACTIVITIES:
Read aloud. Memorise "Family Time"

" We are here now, living in your midst, but you do not see us." Doris Seale, Native American

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD by Ann Cameron. Drawings by Thomas B. Allen. Thomas A. Knopf, NY 1988 57p Gr. 3-6

This neighborhood is in San Pablo, Guatemala, where 7- yr old Juan lives with his grandmother, after having been abandoned by his father, and then by his mother.. His grandmother makes a living by selling *arroz con leche* - rice with milk - in the marketplace.and she sets him up as a shoeshine boy so he can bring in some money. Juan teaches himself to read, eventually goes school, and is a very good student.

The neighborhood is described simply through Juans eyes- the mountains, volcanoes, lake, fields of corn, hill-sides with coffee berry bushes, flowers, orioles, flocks of wild parrots,a few cars and buses,mules and people walking. At the end of this short book Juan sees a colorful tourist poster advertising San Pablo as the' most beautiful place in the world'.He asks his grandmother if this is really so. She answers, **"The most beautiful place in the world, is any place you can hold your head up...and be proud of who you are."**

The author is not Latino but lives most of the year in Guatemala.

ACTIVITIES:
Use as a model for students to describe and write about their own neighborhoods.

DRAGONFLY'S TALE
retold and illustrated by Kristina Rodanas. Clarion Bks. 1992 14.95
ISBN 0-395-57003 Gr.K-3

This Zuni legend which first appeared in print in 1884, tells of the villagers in Hawikuh (New Mexico)who were blessed with a rich corn harvest each year.However, they deliberately wasted much of the corn and the Corn Maidens brought them drought and starvation, so that they had to leave the village in search of food. Two children are left behind by mistake, and the brother creates a dragonfly from a cornstalk and corn leaf to comfort his sister. The toy becomes alive, and gets help from the Corn Maidens. In the spring the tribe returns ,plants a new crop and gives thanks for the bountiful harvest.

CURRICULUM:
Social Science - The culturally- specific illustrations show seasonal clothing, housing, games, crafts of the time; also the desert terrain, plants and seasonal plantings of corn. Art - An artistic teacher can teach the children how to make a corncob dragonfly.

THEME:The central message of not wasting food is not only ecologically correct but is relevant on a school campus!

Hot off the Press...

HOANG ANH: A VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN BOY. By Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith. Photographs by Lawrence Migdale. Holiday House 1992
ISBN 0-8234-0948-1 $14.95 Gr. 3-8

HOW MY FAMILY LIVES IN AMERICA, by Susan Kuklin. Bradbury 1992 ISBN 0-02-751239-8 $13.95 Gr. 1-4

There is an insistent call for multi-cultural literature that relates to the contemporary ethnic communities in this country. Photo journalists are helping to fill the need with attractive pictures and authentic accounts of the lives of new immigrants and ethnic families. We meet *Hoang Anh*, and learn why and how he came to America, and what his life is like now in this country. There is a map, a glossary and two popular legends of the culture included. A well done book for reading, browsing, or using as a resource.

Through photographs and text SUSAN KUKLIN introduces the reader briefly to three families - Puerto Rican, African American and Chinese American. Of special interest are the words and terms in each language that relate to the family relationships and activities. Phonetic pronunciations are given. The book should not be dismissed as a regression to the "food, fun, fiests" approach to multiculturalism.Photo essays provide information and an authentic reflection of a minority child giving him/her validity, self esteem and respect.

ACTIVITIES:
Blow-up and post the foreign words and their pronunciations around the classroom walls.Create opportunities for all the children to use them. Invite a *Madrina*, a *Yay*(yah-ee) or a *Baba* to visit the classroom to talk abut their family life and cultural patterns. Encourage children to bring in "family words" in other languages. Create a multilingual atmosphere. Honor biingual children.Have a snack of *tsu ma liang mein* - the kids will love it and say *Muchas gracias*!

LITTLE BROTHER by Allan Baillie. Viking Penguin 1992
ISBN 0-670-84381-4 Gr.5-8

ATTENTION all teachers desperately looking for a good read-aloud story to hold the attention of older kids during the last weeks of school !
Get a copy of .this rousing escape story set in the aftermath of the Viet Nam war. Two brothers escape from the Khmer Rouge after being in forced labor for almost a year. They get separated and the younger brother, Vithy desperately tries alone to reach the Thailand border and safety. The author effectively explores Vithy's feelings of fear, exhaustion and growing confidence as he follows an arduous trail going north, meeting different kinds of people, who help him in various ways. When he reaches the Thai border, it is closed.but he gets help from the Red Cross and the international team of doctors. There is a happy ending, which I will not divulge!The author has visited and researched this area and its recent history, and acknowledges the help of on-scene organizations.

ACTIVITIES:
Read aloud - (short chapters).
Enlarge the map from the book, and chart Vithy's escape route.

I note the obvious differences
in the human family
Some of us are serious,
some thrive on comedy

****

We seek success in Finland
are born and die in Maine.
In minor ways we differ,
in major we're the same.

I note the obvious differences
between each sort and type
but we are more alike,
my friends
than we are unalike.

Excerpts from poem
"Human Family "
in *I Shall Not be Moved* /Angelou

"When I talk about culture I am talking about a point of view"
Tom Feelings

STEAL AWAY by Jennifer Armstrong. Orchard Bks. 1992 Gr. 5-8

This book is a throwback to the "good-white-person-helps-poor-black person"attitude. It is an unlikely escape story, told in confusing flashback, of two 13 -year old girls, Susannah and her personal slave, Bethlehem.(Should one equate the flight of a white child from an over-strict relative, with the escape of a black slave, where capture means death?) Susannah is in control, even when she makes foolish mistakes that endanger them. The actual escape is very tame when compared with other novels about daring escapes of slaves- escapes which they planned and executed. When Susannah gets very sick Bethlehem goes for help (loyal-slave saves-white-master syndrome). Much is made of the supposed "friendship" of the two girls, but when they reach freedom, Beth decides to continue on to Canada, rather than go with Susannah to her home in Vermont. (Her independence here,is a redeeming feature) Susannah is amazed and hurt at this decision! The girls don't see each other for fifty years, until Susannah goes to Canada to visit an ailing Beth - and that's where the story starts in the book. I found the point of view patronising, the moralising too obvious and the premise improbable.
NOT RECOMMENDED
Written in consultation with Patricia Sandefur, African American librarian

Good escape stories -
A Girl Called Boy / Joyce Hansen*
This Strange New Feeling / Julius Lester*.

Throughout American, from north to south, the dominant culture acknowledges Indians as objects of study, but denies them as subjects of history.

Eduardo Galeano

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND OPINIONS

Multiculturalism is an evolving philosophy. The last few decades have seen different attitudes, strategies and materials, embraced or repudiated. Recently multicultural children's literature is being acknowledged as a small part of this movement. Its role is in the process of being identified, analysed and promoted. With increasing attention from the publishers, and even from the popular press, new questions, and new answers to old concerns are arising.
Librarians and teachers using these books need to be aware of and involved in this interesting debate.
This section will explore this debate. If you have questions or opinions, send them in (but keep them brief)

• •

QUESTION: Do legends and folktales from many cultures have ANY value for multicultural education?_ Shouldn't we use instead, picture books, fiction and non-fiction relating to contemporary ethnic groups in the U.S.? (Julie Itaya, M.Ed, Sacramento.)

QUESTION: Are their special strategies to use with introducing multicultural literature, so that students' attitudes may be positively affected?
Think about and discuss these questions. Send me your opinions, and look for the next issues to report on these topics.

• •

THANKS to Delores Vinal, District Librarian, Redwood City Elementary Schools for sending me a comment by a teacher who noted that there were some inaccuracies in the clothing of the Indians in Jeffers' book, *Brother Eagle Sister Sky* (reviewed Jan. 92, #2). She also sent in Chief Seattle's original speech in its entirety. Did you notice that Jeffers' book was on the New York Times adult Best Seller List!

• •

HELP NEEDED: One reader wants to know if any high school has updated its required reading list to add and include multicultural literature published after 1975? If so, could you send me a list of such titles and I will send it on to her.

QUESTION: Are the only valid multicultural books those that are written and/or illustrated by ethnic authors?

The African American artist/illustrator Tom Feelings says "Truly authentic multicultural books are created - written and illustrated - by people who belong to the race, culture or nation of origin which is reflected in the book" (The Multicolored Mirror) It is, of course, self evident that such authors and artists have the best insights, attitudes and knowledge of their own cultures.

But there are some good books in this field that are not written by ethnic persons. The January 1992 issue of School Library Journal devoted a special section to "The Many Faces in Children's Books", and provided some new answers to this question.

ANN CAMERON, the author of the much-loved "Julian-stories" books is of Scandinavian ancestry but spends most of the year now living in Guatemala. She asks "What entitles any writer to draw the portrait of a culture.. [or] a reader to judge that portrait?", and answers, "Our license to create...is not a particular racial.. .background. It is our humanness.". She continues with an articulate argument that decries the "pigeonholing [of] people", the "airtight racial compartments" and the fact that such reasoning could restrict ethnic authors to writing only about their own cultures.

MILDRED PITTS WALTER, the African American award-winning author says, "I create images for all children within and outside of the black experience....[to show] that we are, as human beings, very much alike, but culturally different...".

My opinion, as an evaluator, is that a non-ethnic writer or illustrator should present to the reader their research, experience or other authority to validate their work..

THINK AHEAD!
Subscribe Today for Next Year.

I invite you to use the enclosed form to subscribe to THE MIRROR, for the next school year. Note that the periodicity and format will be changed, though the objectives and content will remain the same. There will be fewer issues , but more pages, more reviews and more information. More books are coming into this field now, and though I read many I can only review a few in the Newsletter. The WINTER issue's **Annotated List of recent Recommended Multicultural Literature, K-8** will include these additional titles.

• •

INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIPTION
Stamp out Stamps!
I have been wallowing in stamps this year! Pretty ones too! However, I feel it is simpler both for you and me to use checks. I have made a careful evaluation and set the subscription to barely cover my costs (taking into account the limited membership at this time.)

• •

GROUP SUBSCRIPTION
Easier for Me, Cheaper for You
The purpose of this Newsletter, is to get the word out to teachers directly, or through librarians, to use good multicultural literature in the classroom. Because I have had several requests this last year for permission to copy THE MIRROR for particular inservice workshops , I have created a subscription category where districts etc have permission to copy and distribute this Newsletter to teachers, parents and library staff.

PLEASE GET THE WORD OUT!

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 educators and parents

Fall 1992

No. 5

Reflecting Culturally Diverse Children's Books

Reviewed in this Issue

Ahyoka and the Talking Leaves / Roop [2-4]
**Ashok* / Yamate [1-4]
**Bawshou Rescues the Sun* / Yeh [1-4]
**Desert Mermaid* / Desierto [ps-2]
**Elijah/s Angel* / Rosen/Robinson [2-6]
Hoang Breaks the Lucky Teapot/ Breckler [ps-1]
Island Baby / Keller [ps-1]
**Just Like Martin* / Davis [7-8+]
**Kenji & the Magic Geese* / Johnson /Tsieng [1-3]
Listening Silence / Root [NR]
Love Flute / Goble [3-6]
Mama, Do You Love Me /Joosse [ps-1]
**Moon Lady* /Tan [2-6]
Moon Rope / Ehlert [1-2]
**Neighborhood Odes* / Soto [4-8+]
**One More River to Cross* / Haskins
Sami and the Time of Troubles/ Heide [3-6+]
Saturnalia / Fleischman [7-8]
Save my Rain Forest / Zak [2-5]
Secret of the Seal / Davis [3-5]
**Sing to the Sun* / Bryan [All]
**Thirteen Moons on a Turtle's Back* / Bruchac [1-5]
Talking Walls / Knight [3-8]
You're my Nikki / Eisenberg [ps-1]

* Ethnic authors/illustrators
[ ] Grade levels can be flexible.

Editor: Gloria D. Jackson
Layout/Graphics: Lynn Clark

Copyright.

The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage the use of culturally diverse books in K-8 schools,by reviewing new books, suggesting curricular activities, and discussing issues surrounding this literature.

SING TO THE SUN; Poems and pictures by Ashley Bryan HarperCollins 1992
ISBN 0-06-020833-3 **All Ages**

Ashley Bryan is a well known and loved artist, author and storyteller Through the years,he has given meaning to the works of other poets through his inspiring and invigorating readings. Now, at last, he has penned his own poems and illustrated them with pictures that have the luminosity of stained glass windows. The sunshine and water, flowers and fish, birds and animals of the Caribbean islands give exuberance to the pictures, as do the figures that glory in their color - the bouncing children, the artist, the beaded lady, the storyteller,,the pretty girl, the man with a horn, the mother waving farewell. The sensitive and rhythmic poems are short, and in varying styles. They extol love for family, community and heritage.

..."On the beach
Other children
Dig to China
I dig
To Africa".

What a joyful experience! Ashley sings of his roots, and all the songs are beautiful..

CURRICULUM:
Language Arts - Poetry

THE MOON LADY by Amy Tan.
Illustrated by Gretchen Shields.
Macmillan, NY 1992
ISBN 0-02-788830-4. **Gr. 2-4**

Taken from the author's- *Joy Luck Club* - this is the story of The Moon Lady as told by a Chinese-American grandmother. She recalls her experiences as a 7-yr-old-girl in China, her belief in the Moon Lady until she comes up against reality, and her experience of falling into the river when her father rented a party boat to celebrate the Moon Lady festival. This skeleton plot does not do justice to the absorbing Amy Tan style of narration which melds fantasy and reality skillfully, introduces conflict and suspense gently, weaves in description and character development, focuses on personal feelings and thoughts, and provides a cultural ambience that is unobtrusive yet rich with detail.

Traditional Tales to Read and Tell

BAWSHOU RESCUES THE SUN: A HAN FOLKTALE by Chun-Chan Yeh and Allan Baillie With illustrations by Michelle Powell. Scholastic,NY 1991
ISBN 0-590-45453-6 Gr. 1-4

This long fairy tale has been adapted collaboratively by a professor from Beijing, China and an Australian author . The King of the Devils stole the Sun. This plunged the land into darkness and withered all the rice plants. Liu Chun embarks on the dangerous journey to rescue the Sun,with a golden phoenix to guide him - but he never returns. Meanwhile, his wife bares a son, Bawshou .One day the golden phoenix returns alone. He touches the child Bawshou who magically grows to the stature of a giant in a very short time, and then he goes in quest of the Sun. There are many hardships and dangers, but with the help of three magic gifts, he finds the Devils' home and the dying sun..He vanquishes the devils, and restores the sun to the sky.We never learn if he returned home! But "that's the way it was, a thousand years ago" and now the West Lake in Eastern China has a pagoda called Bawshou. "That is the way it is". The illustrations are colorful, but not overpowering even though they envelope the text on double page spreads.The people depicted are realistic and non-stereotypic. The devils seem to be wearing devil masks, which will delight rather than scare children! It is the familiar myth motif of good vanquishing evil, but is grounded in the geography and culture of China. Our review committee gave this high marks.
Gr. 1-4
CURRICULUM: - Language Arts - Dramatise (kids will clamber to play the devils.) Art - Make devil masks! Science - Why we need sunshine.
ALSO READ: *Dragonfly's tale* / Rodanas
Arrow to the Sun / Mcdermott
Greek myth - *Persephone*

LOVE FLUTE . Story and illustrations by Paul Goble. Bradbury Pr., N.Y. 1992.
ISBN 0-02-736261-2. Gr. 3-6

Paul Goble has impeccable credentials for writing and illustrating traditional stories of the Plains Indians and the Lakota nation. Yet, recognising the current multicultural emphasis on authenticity, he provides an impressive list (40 lines) of references he consulted, and gives information on where to purchase audio-cassette tapes of traditional Lakota flute songs. The long introduction explains the authentic courtship traditions from their heritage, and the role of the love flute

The story itself, is simple - A young man, too shy to approach the girl he loves, goes on a journey and is given a cedar flute by two Elk men. On the return home he gathers the sounds of the birds and forest into his flute and creates his own beautiful music by which he woos his girl, when he returns to the village. Goble's illustrations are stylish and attractive..This is a picture book for young children, but since the content deals with love and courtship traditions it could be effectively used with older students.
CURRICULUM: .
Language Arts - Research and tell folktales and legends that center on musical instruments. (Myth - *Orpheus*; etc)
Music -Get audio cassette tapes of flute music to play in class.

RESOURCE READING
CATCH THE WHISPER OF THE WIND by Cheewa James, Illustrations by David and Jean Villasenor. Horizon 2000, 3330 Union Springs Way, Sacramento, CA 95827.
This paperback book of inspirational quotes from the American Indian heritage and people is attractively packaged with an audio cassette of ethnic songs and music. **The American Indian quotations scattered in this issue are from this book.**

KENJI AND THE MAGIC GEESE
by Ryerson Johnson. Illustrated by Jean and Mou-sien Tseng. Simon and Schuster Bks. for Young Readers, NY 1992
ISBN..0-671-75974-4 Gr. K-3

Children will find that this folktale from Japan has an unusual twist. The double-page illustrations are realistic and culture-specific showing young Kenji, his family, their home
and village, and the wild geese that fly overhead The plot centers on the beautiful wild geese painted on the special scroll in their house. Read the tale to find out why the number of geese on the scroll magically change from five, to four and then to seven! Children will enjoy the slight suspense and satisfying resolution. Kenji is a resourceful little guy, who thinks and acts independently and creatively. Our review committee gave this an enthusiastic "thumbs up".
CURRICULUM:
Language Arts - Stop the story and have children predict what will happen next.

SUKEY AND THE MERMAID by Robert San Souci. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Four Winds Pr., 1992
ISBN 0-02-778141-0 14.95 Gr. K-3

A well-crafted retelling of an African American folktale with unusual illustrations. With rhythmic language and some 'local' dialogue the author tells a story that has many twists and turns.It is about Sukey, who was ill-treated by her step-father , ran away and met a mermaid - Mama Jo - who befriends her, gives her gifts, shelter, advice. Protects her from the evil stepfather and punishes him, so that Sukey lives happily ever after. At the end of the book the author traces his search for the roots of this folktale. (Such details give validity to a mainstream author writing an ethnic book.)
CURRICULUM:
Language Arts - Storytelling and dramatisation.

Stories of the Here and Now

Commentary:

Recognition for multicultural children's literature is increasing and now there is a cry for more contemporary stories about ethnic minority children and their communities. In the May issue of THE MIRROR, I asked readers to think about the relative merits of contemporary stories as against the traditional folktales that abound in children's literature. Since then I have received input from the Review Committee.

Traditional Tales -

There is a feeling that folktales provides roots for the understanding of a culture - both for the minority and mainstream readers.

In comparing such stories from different cultures it is also worthwhile to see the uncanny similarities in theme, motif, character or plot. So that, even as these books clothe the uniqueness of a heritage in geographical and visual roots, yet they can show a commonality that encourages understanding between cultures.

Contemporary stories

These frequently lack the depth in plot, the color in character, the intensity of conflict and , of course, the aura of magic that is so attractive in traditional tales. Adult "ethnic" novels and short stories abound in these elements.Of course adults have a larger canvas of experience to draw on, but children of color are not strangers to reality. Teachers know that many of their young students live with hunger and poverty, witness violence and discrimination,and feel hopeless and rejected. Many are anchored by family support, rejoice in cultural festivals, nourish dreams and achieve impossible goals. We need this drama in children's stories of the "here and now". The recent Summer Olympics showed many, many persons of color who have overcome obstacles and risen from defeat to become winners. So - the stories are there! They need to be written. They will give relevance to reading.

ELIJAH'S ANGEL; A Story for Chanukah and Christmas by Michael Rosen, Illus. by Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego 1992
ISBN 0-15-225394-7 Gr. 2-8

This sensitive picture book has a story that reconciles religious differences and extols friendship between an eighty-year-old black man and a young Jewish boy. Elijah is a barber,and does primitive wood carvings.He gives Michael one of his wooden angels as a gift. "It's an angel of friendship" says Michaels father. Michael then takes Elijah a gift - it is a menorah. A Jewish parent noted that some explanations about Chanukah had been omitted, but felt this a minor point, and that the overall message was important.. The art is colorful and crowded, and in primitive style, reflecting , I feel, Elijah's barbershop. Very young children may find the pictures confusing. There really was an Elijah Pierce He lived from 1892-1984.. The Columbus Museum of Art now owns 300 pieces of his work.

Curriculum:

Social Studies: Religions, their origins and festivals

Art. Children can opt to draw and explain symbols from their religion.

ASHOK; By Any Other Name
by Sandra W. Yamate, Illus. by Janice Tohinaka. Polychrome Pub. Corp.
4509 North Francisco Ave, Chicago IL 60625-3808 1992 ISBN 1-879965-01-1
Gr. 1-3

Ashok is a winsome boy of East Indian culture. His name sets him apart and he tries to change it to Tom then Walter then Francis but there is always some hitch that causes the kids to laugh at him.When the school librarian tells of his own "ever-so-great-grandfather" who came here as a slave and was not allowed to keep his own name Ashok realises that he should keep his name and make it count for something. There is an end note on the life of the great King Asoka, who ruled India wisely for 37 years during the 3rd century BC.
This is a charming book,with a relevant theme and simple illustrations that could be aspired to by a good student artist.

SAMI AND THE TIME OF TROUBLES
by Florence Parry Heide and Judith Heide Gilliland. Illustrated by Ted Lewin.
Clarion, NY 1992 ISBN 0-395-55964-2
Gr. 3-6+

Judith Gilliland spent some years living in Lebanon and knows the "troubles" she narrates. Listen to the words of 10-yr-old Sami, telling about the "time of guns and bombs... that has lasted all my life". The expressive illustrations show Sami huddling in the dark basement with his family during the bombardment or playing on the street on "quiet days". Life goes on in the sporadic spaces of peace - adults smoke in the outdoor cafes, children play at war, a bride picks her around the bombing litter. They remember the day in the past when the children paraded for peace, and Sami hopes they will do that again - and that peace will come. The illustrations are culture-specific yet realistic, showing most of the people wearing Western clothes. This is an "illustrated" book for older children that honestly looks at the face of war.It does not name or blame political factions but concentrates on feelings.Discussions should include how children in other parts of the world (Ireland, Israel, Africa, South America) are also being scarred by continual war.

Books for the Very Young Child

The Editor serves on a committee for the Child Development Division of the California State Department of Education, which is devising a pre-school program guide that uses multicultural literature. This has brought about an awareness that there are not many such books, and the demand is increasing. Here therefore, are a few titles that can move into this segment

YOU'RE MY NIKKI by Phyllis Rose Eisenberg, pictures by Jill Kastner. Dial Books for Young Readers, NY 1992 ISBN 0-8037-1129-8 **Gr. Ps-1**

Nikki, a preschool child, needs reassurance that her mother will remember who she is when she starts a new job. . She dresses up as her brother, then her sister etc and continually asks her mother if she recognises her in these disguises! She tests her mother with - "what's my favorite trick...dance... friend.. etc." Her mother passes all the tests! But when she returns from work the next day, she is too busy with fixing dinner to play the same game with Nikki - who is discouraged. "I knew you'd forget me" she says disconsolately and goes to her room. But Mama makes everything right before bedtime.The single-parent, African American family is winsomely portrayed in text and picture. Children will identify with this story.

HOANG BREAKS THE LUCKY TEAPOT by R.K. Breckler Houghton, NY 1992 **Gr. Ps-1**

Very sweet little picture book, though the illustrations seem somewhat blurred. Young Hoang breaks the lucky teapot given to the family by grandmother before they left the old country. He and his family believe very strongly in its power to bring good or bad luck and now Hoang feels responsible for bringing on this bad luck. During the night he gets up and tries - quite skillfully - to mend the teapot. The next morning his mother is smiling as she uses it, and he feels forgiven.
The value of this book is in it being a "here and now" experience of a Vietnamese immigrant family.

MAMA, DO YOU LOVE ME by Barbara M. Joose, illustrated by Barbara Lavallee. 1992 Chronicle Bks. San Francisco, CA **Gr. Ps-1**

Exquisite art, attractive layout and fine paper make this an aesthetic treat - this is what Chronicle Books does very well.. The story is set in the Eskimo/Inuit community in the Arctic region. It has many cultural details in the story and illustrations and is similar to the traditional *Runaway Bunny* in motif. The child asks, "Mother will you love me if ....". and there are many specific actions, including breaking the best plates, becoming a big, scary polar bear.." etc. Mother says she will be - at various times - sad, angry, scared, confused .... but "I will always love you."

THE DESERT MERMAID; La Sirena Del Desierto Story by Alberto Blanco. Pictures by Patricia Revah. Children's Book Press, San Francisco 1992 ISBN 0-89239-106-5 **Gr.1-2**

This original story by the Mexican poet Blanco is set in the Sonora Desert.It tells of a mermaid, lonely in a pool that is drying up because she sings no more. An old Indian comes by and gives her his magic horse to go and find the songs. She visits the Songbirds to learn the music, the Lizard to learn the words, the Turtle to get a guitar and eventually reaches the Sea, where she gets the rhythm. As she sings her songs she enchants the menacing alligators, and sees hundreds of mermaids rise from the sea and welcome her home. A simple story, whose main merit is in its cultural setting, its bilingualism, and in the unusual and lovely illustrations set in cross-stich patterns and created by Patricia Revah, a Latino tapestry artist of international fame.

ISLAND BABY by Holly Keller, author and illustrator. Greenwillow Bks, N.Y. 1992 ISBN 0-688-10580-7 **Gr. Ps-1**

Set on a Caribbean island, the pictures in this book are saturated with tropical colors - and satisfactorily anchored in basic shapes . The short text is set in sun-bright white rectangles, bordered by multi-colored parrots, pink flamingoes etc. The faces of young Simon and his grandpa, Pops, are brown circles;vertical and horizontal lines outline structures while the oval shapes of fruit, , and sleeping cat add contrast. The story brings to pre-school level the experience of rescuing, nurturing and releasing an injured wild animal; this time a baby flamingo that young Simon finds, nurtures, and reluctantly releases.But old Pops makes him feel proud of what he has done. Later Simon asks his mother - "Mama, when I start going to school will you miss me?"
"Of course I will" Mama said, "But I'll be proud of you too."
The message is subtle but comforting.

MOON ROPE; UN LAZO A LA LUNA by Lois Ehlert. Translated into Spanish by Amy Prince. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, CA ISBN 0-15-255343-6 **Gr. Ps-2**

This bilingual picture book is arresting! Full color pages are dominated by over-sized, stylised animals, worms,and birds in bright primary colors including shiny silver. The Peruvian folktale is short - about the The Fox, resplendent in silver on a double-page spread - and his friend the Mole, who climb up to the Moon on a grass rope.The mole slips back to earth, but who knows if the Fox made it! The artist was "inspired by ancient Peruvian textiles, jewelry, ceramics, sculpture and architectural detail" and the result is outstanding, and particularly suitable for large group viewing.

Picture Books that make you think

Commentary:

Multicultural children's literature is "in"! Most publishers have a Multicultural List. The majority of these cultural books are picture books, or large format books with lots of pictures. There seems to be a general trend towards publishing more "picture books" that have critical thinking content, abstract symbolism, factual base and sophisticated illustrations - books that are actually more suitable for older students. I can see some reasons for doing this, but **many of these excellent books will fall in the cracks - under-used by young children, and not used by older students** because (1) they are usually not in middle school libraries, (2) they are classified "E" in most libraries and kept in the juvenile section where no teenager would be caught dead!
These books are an excellent source of cultural information not only through the illustrations which give visual validation to minority children, but also in the historical, contemporary and folk stories that provide cultural insight for all students.The fact that these books are attractive, shorter and easier to read also make them more accessible to reluctant readers.

So how can we get middle school kids to read these books? How can teachers overcome the "I'm not a dummy! I don't need a picture book!" reaction of the older student. Here are some suggestions.

1.Why not a new literary category that gives adult dignity to these books! (After all "coffee-table" books are sorta inflated picture books, and even men read them!) The only term I can think of is ILLUSTRATED BOOKS, but I feel there must be something better. Ask your older **students** to think of a catchy term that will attract their peers.
2. Middle school **librarians** can purchase, display and introduce these multicultural "illustrated books" to students and to teachers, and distribute a list from which students can make choices.
3. **Teachers** can give an option for book reports. Instead of the sacred one- hundred- pages rule, they will accept a combined total of 100 pages from two, or at the most, three, "illustrated books" that are "multicultural."
Other ideas out there? Let's share them!

SAVE MY RAINFOREST by Monica Zak. Illustrations by Bengt-Arne Runnerstrom. English version by Nancy Schimmel. Volcano Press,P.O.Box 270, Volcano, CA 95689 1992. $14.95 ISBN 0-912078-94-4 Teachers Guide 4.95. Available in Spanish from Iaconi Press under the title *Salven Mi Selva*
Gr. 3 - 6

This is a true story of a young boy in Mexico undertaking an exhausting journey to see the rain forest, and try to save it. Omar, is seven years old when he sees, on television, that the forest is being cut down and the beautiful wild birds are being sold in the city. He wants to prevent this. He and his father walk 870 miles to see the last rain forest in Mexico (Lacandon Rainforest), Subsequently they journey to the governor of the province and the President of Mexico, taking letters begging them to stop the cutting and burning of the timber and the selling of the exotic tropical birds. The President promises to pass laws to accomplish this, but a few years later Omar is disillusioned to see wild birds still being sold in the marketplace.. The statement at the end of the book shows that Omar, now eleven years old, is still

visiting governors (by bicycle this time) to ask them to put pressure on the President to save the rain forest.
I am not in favor of using children's stories as a cloak for propaganda, but this is not a fairy tale or fable, but a true story of what one small boy believed in and worked towards.
CURRICULUM:
Science - Ecology. Biology (tropical birds)

TALKING WALLS by Mary Burns Knight, Illustrated by Ann Sibley O'Brien. Tilbury House Pubs.ME
ISBN 0-88448-102-6 Gr. 3-8

"Before I built a wall, I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out.."
Robert Frost

This is an interesting topic. The author discusses fourteen historic walls from many countries and religions.Each has a double-page illustration and about fifteen lines of explanation to give the location, time and reason for building the wall.This is more than "just" a picture book! The subject demands some knowledge of geography and history, and certainly cries out to be further researched by older students. Besides the Berlin Wall, Great Wall of China, Vietnam Memorial, the book includes lesser-known walls in South America, Mexico, India and Africa.
CURRICULUM:
Social Studies - Identify locations on maps. Math: Compare their measurements. Make comparative graphs

Biographies. . . Poems. . . and Novels

ONE MORE RIVER TO CROSS; The Stories of Twelve Black Americans. Scholastic, NY 1992 ISBN 0-590-42896-9
Gr. 4-6 Readaloud Gr. 5-8 Self-read

Jim Haskins, a prolific "young-adult" author has excelled himself in this book, which includes biographies of twelve Black Americans who overcame considerable odds to achieve their goals. The format is biographical, with dates and chronological sequence in each story, yet there is enough adventure, courage, heartbreak, striving and success to rival any good adventure yarn. The men and women represent science, exploration, business, art, aeronautics, sports and politics and most of them lived in this century. The author documents the prejudice and poverty they encountered but the emphasis is on the contributions they made. The biographies run about 16 pages each and the writing is easily comprehended and fast-paced.There is a bibliography of resource books and articles for student research and also an index.
CURRICULUM:
U.S. History. . Language Arts. Have students assume the roles of some characters. Present a classroom "Meeting of the Minds" program, or have presentations/discussions.

YANG THE YOUNGEST AND HIS TERRIBLE EAR by Lensey Namioka. Illustrated by Kees de Kiefte. Little, Brown
1992 ISBN 0-316-59701-5 Gr. 4-7

Yingtao is the youngest of the four Yang children who have recently emigrated to Seattle with their musician parents. The action of the story centers round the string quartet the children are to play for the first recital of their father - who teaches the violin. Everyone acknowledges that Yingtao is tone deaf, but - he has a natural aptitude for baseball. His red-haired schoolmate, Matthew, on the other hand, plays the violin well, but HIS father is bent on making him a good baseball player! This conflict is the commonality between the two cultures, and weaves itself around the dialogue, family confrontations, character revelations, humorous incidents, and final resolution. With 134 pages, short chapters, snappy dialogue this is a perfect "book-report-book"! Could be great for reading aloud also, but the action takes you into the personal lives of an immigrant family, and this may embarrass some students in your class. Teachers can be sensitive to this.
CURRICULUM: Language Arts:

NEIGHBORHOOD ODES by Gary Soto. Illustrated by David Diaz. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, CA 1992
ISBN 0-15-256879-4 Gr. 4-8

A delightful volume of poetic memories from Soto's youth in Fresno.Each poem covers about two pages.The lines are short-modestly hiccupping their way down the page, poking fun at Senor Leal's goat or extolling the joys of eating los chicharrones.

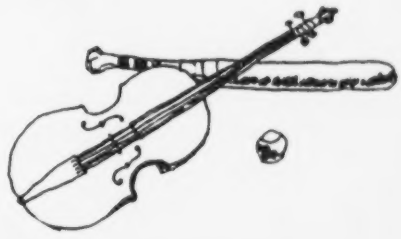
Soto's gift is in making the banal beautiful! Read his Ode to Pablo's Tennis Shoes those...

."twin pets
That snuggle his toes".
Or one in praise of the Sprinkler, that..
"helicopter of water
Slicing our legs/"

Among these odes to the ordinary is the tragic figure of La Llorona, that archtypal figure in Hispanic folklore. La Llorona,

"..the mother
Of drowned children.
Beware a woman
Dripping water in July
When no rain has fallen."

There are many Spanish phrases and words that are included,(and listed in a glossary). The poems encourage us to be more observant of daily happenings, and to see humor and beauty in them.
CURRICULUM:
Language arts - Explore Poetry forms. Compile a class book of original neighborhood odes.



JUST LIKE MARTIN by Ossie Davis. Simon & Schuster, NY 1992
ISBN 0-671-73202-1 Gr. 7-Adult

Now here is a book you can't put down! Ossie Davis, actor and playwright, gives an emotional immediacy to the stirring civil rights events of the early 60s - the March to Washington; the impact of Dr. King's "I have a Dream" speech; the tragedy of the church bombing. It explores these from the view and through the actions of Stone, a 14-year-old black student, who is committed to the cause. It uses his father, a bitter Korean War veteran, to dramatise the debate within the black community about non-violence. The personal and political actions build towards a logical, and satisfying resolution. Though there are a few expletives thrown in, in keeping with the explosive situations faced, this is an excellent book for mature middle school students, and excerpts can be effectively read aloud in class.

SATURNALIA by Paul Fleishman. HarperKeypoint paperback (HarperCollins NY) c1990 ISBN 0-06-447089-X pbk
Gr.7-8

The value of this book is the fine literary style that describes and personalizes the people and activities of a colonial town. There is the nosy tithingman, the vicious eyeglass maker ,the haunted woodcarver, the "penny a peep" vendor setting up his 3-ft long telescope, the honest printer and others. There are also indentured servants, some of which are Indians captured during King Philip's War (1675). William/ Weetasket is one of these - a young man whose activities pull together these various lives. By day he is apprenticed to the printer, and by night he furtively wanders the streets, playing long-ago tunes on his flute to find his lost twin brother. There is conflict, suspense and even a murder. Like all good literature the book raises questions not answered in a first quick reading. Just issued in paperback, this could be considered for a classroom set of literature.

CURRICULUM: Social Studies American history.

1992 - The Year of the American Indian

Commentary: Stamp Out Stereotypes!

Recently I heard about a new children's play in which some of the humor is provided by the children playing bashful, giggling Indian maidens or mimicking Indian dancing or folding their arms in mock seriousness, and saying UGH. All this as a trigger for laughter. Why is this old image being reinforced in the minds of children? Instead of perpetuating this stereotype we should be using books to teach all kids about the achievements of great Indians - like Sequoyah. (More than a century ago the Cherokee nation had its own newspapers, containing thousands of words, of which UGH was not one!) At a time when decent society refuses to encourage ethnic jokes or racial parodies , the Indian stereotypes are still fair game in entertainment. We should stop laughing; stop tolerating it as innocent fun; and give American Indians respect.

In children's literature there are many beautiful books on Native American legends and folktales. But too frequently their pictures present exotic, violent or mystical "Indian" people from out of the past. As such they reinforce the primitive images implanted through early textbooks. What we need are stories about American Indians as they live and work here and now - in our schools and communities; in pueblos and on reservations; in cities, in universities and offices.It is time to open our minds and Stamp Out Stereotypes.

AHYOKA AND THE TALKING LEAVES by Peter and Connie Roop. Ilustrated by Yoshi Miyake. Lothrop 1992 60p ISBN 0-688-10697-8 Gr. 2-4

This easy-reading, book provides insight into the formidable task of creating a written language. By 1821 Sequoyah, of the Cherokee nation, had "accomplished something no one person had ever done before - [creating] a written language from a spoken language." History acknowledges that he did this "by the aid of his daughter, who seemed to enter into the genius of his clabors." With a simple vocabulary, the authors have crafted an interesting book fleshing out the character of this girl - Ahyoka and describing how they spent 18 years, under difficult conditions, devising a syllabary of 86 signs for the Tsalagi language. The story also follow the "coming of age" of Ahyoka. The black and white illustrations have interesting depth and attractive, non-stereotypical people. An excellent epilogue and bibliography document this work.

CURRICULUM:

Social Studies: How did languages start? Have students bring in written scripts of foreign languages they speak or read.

The Lakota thought of air
much the same way
as the white man does of water -
something cleansing
something to bathe in.
***Catch the Whisper of the Wind/* James**

SEQUOIA

THE SECRET OF THE SEAL by Deborah Davis. Illustrated by Judy Labraska Crown Pub. NY 1989 57p ISBN 0-517-56725-3

Gr. 3-5

Kyo, an Inuit (Inuk) boy takes his harpoon out to hunt a seal. He cuts an ice hole and waits patiently, but when the seal appears he makes friends with it, calling it Tooky. When his uncle comes to the village with a snowmobile to capture a seal to put in the city zoo, Kyo finds ways to steer him away from Tooky's ice-hole. Inevitably his uncle hunts down Tooky. But wait - all is not lost!(Let the children predict an ending.)A gentle, contemporary story, with enough conflict to hold interest. Has cultural details about living on the tundra.

Good for reading aloud. Short chapters.

CURRICULUM:

Science - How do seals live. Should animals be kept in zoos?

THIRTEEN MOONS ON TURTLE'S BACK; A Native American Year of Moons by Joseph Bruchac and Jonathan London. Illustrated by Thomas Locker. Philomel Books, NY 1992 ISBN-399-22141-7 Gr. 1-5

There are thirteen scales on a turtle's back, explains a grandfather to a child ,just as there are thirteen moons in each year. The storyteller, poet and artist collaborate to carefully craft, in beautiful words and pictures, stories from thirteen Native American cultures to explain the natural events surrounding each "moon". Each of these has a double page spread, with the legend or story (brief) at left and the corresponding scene of nature overflowing from the facing page into the poetic text.

The illustrations evoke the mystery of nature and are true to the areas represented. Nowhere is there a stereotypical feathered headdress or tepee! The stories have the cadence and content of authentic Indian folklore. Especially good for storytelling.

CURRICULUM: Science - Seasons, weather, animals etc.

Social Studies - Native American customs.

What should it matter that one bowl is
dark
and the other pale,
if each is of good design
and serves its purpose well.
***Catch the Whisper of the Wind/* James**

Criteria for Evaluating Multicultural Children's Literature

The criteria I have developed from research and experience apply particularly to books recommended for use in the classroom
Here "literature" is used as a generic term - not in the "classics - great writing" sense, though good writing is always considered.

The following is a simple evaluative formula. The books should have all of these elements andshould be: -
APPROPRIATE - in language, content and illustration for the grade level recommended.
ATTRACTIVE - representing the culture and community positively in characterization, plot, and illustration. Encouraging self-esteem and respect. Enjoyable.
AUTHENTIC - true to the culture reflected - avoiding stereotypes in personalities, plots and pictures - being culture-specific but not extolling the exotic. The creators of the book should have ethnic roots of that culture, or should show their research or experience in that field.
APPLICABLE - have value for classroom activities and / or curriculum impact.

Not Recommended

THE LISTENING SILENCE by Phyllis Root (HarperCollins 1992) is a well written , haunting novel of a young American Indian girl whose destiny is to be a *healer* for her people. It reads like historical fiction or legend and includes a lot of italicised, unfamiliar terms that seem to give cultural validity.There is also a glossary of these terms. I had to read the publisher's blurb on the jacket to find that the book is actually a "lyrical fantasy" that was 'inspired 'by Native American mythology. As a reviewer I find this confusion disconcerting.

Without the illustrations (a mix of Indian costumes from various tribes), this story could be set in an ancient time, in any cold region . My feeling that the " special" words were fictional was corroborated by an American Indian reviewer .

My problem with the book is that it appears to be multicultural literature when it is not. It gives a false impression of cultural validity. It is not rooted in American Indian history but reflects rather the vague "mystical Indian heritage" that we have overplayed in literature. In this day of awakened multiculturalism, when there is a demand for children's books with cultural authenticity, the ambivalent genre of this book is misleading to the young reader and a disservice to this heritage.

This could be remedied somewhat, if the publisher would make very clear in the body of the book- foreword, sub-title, author's note etc - that the story is fantasy, does not represent any particular tribe; and that the strange vocabulary is not of Native American origin.

Conferences

American Indian Education Conference CA State Dept. of Education.
February 11-14, Sacramento, CA
Workshops on culturally relevant and tribally specific information to include
in classroom activities.
Call (916) 657-5492 for information.

Third Annual National Conference of The Multicultural Publishers Exchange. San Francisco, **October 15-18,1992.** Registration - $75.00 to 150.00. Call (608) 244-5633
Workshops for people WRITING and PUBLISHING culturally diverse books

追　悼

YOSHIKO UCHIDA, 192?- 1992

It was with real sadness that I heard of the sudden death of Yoshiko Uchida. She was an early pioneer in multi-cultural literature , and an exemplary writer. Many years ago I invited her to speak to my class of children and I have never forgotten her gentle manner.
Yet she had the courage to break the wall of silence on the internment of Japanese citizens and to write about this without bitterness. Her many books on traditional Japanese folktales, and about contemporary Japanese-American life are a legacy for all children.

"..although it is important for each of us to cherish our own special heritage, I believe, above everything else, we must all celebrate our common humanity."
Yoshika Uchida

REVIEW COMMITTEE
This multiethnic group of educators and parents meets informally for reviewing and discussing new books. I want to thank them for their input.
Joan Ainslie, Rosa Bocanegra Lisa Delfino, Kate Farrell, Carmen Hernandez, Annis Huang, Julie Itaya, Jimmie Johnson, Kathy Orihuela,Barbie Ross and Sudesh Singhal.

The MIRROR will be issued three times this year. The Fall '92 and Spring '93 issues will review new books. The Winter '92 issue will be an annotated, recommended list of K-8 multicultural literature.
Subscriptions are -
Individual - $5.00; Group - $25.00.
Group subscription includes permission to copy all or parts of the Newsletter for distribution within a non-profit educational institution or program. Subscriptions may be sent to:
Gloria Jackson, 45 Moonlit Circle, Sacramento, CA 95831.

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 educators and parents
Winter 1993
No. 6

Reflecting on our Cultural Diversity through Children's Books

Love... Letters ... Languages

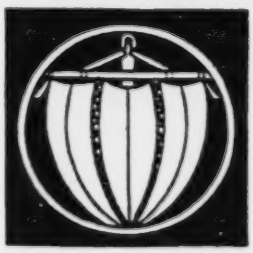
Michael Dorris, a member of the Modoc tribe, has given us a book of pristine beauty in ***MORNING GIRL.*** It reads easily, yet has naturally exquisite language that abounds in metaphors, unhackneyed description and universal insights. Set in a Taino community before the arrival of Columbus, it explores the loving relationships and individual growth of a family of four. The chapters alternate between the voices of Morning Girl, and her younger brother - Star Boy. There are cultural details but the focus is on the love, loyalty and sharing between the parents and children. At the end of the story, Morning Girl swims out to welcome a canoe bearing overclothed men who speak a strange language! The Afterword gives a brief reminder of the betrayal that followed, and the fate of this peaceful community.
CURRICULUM: Language Arts/ Literature - Excellent for classroom study
READ ALOUD

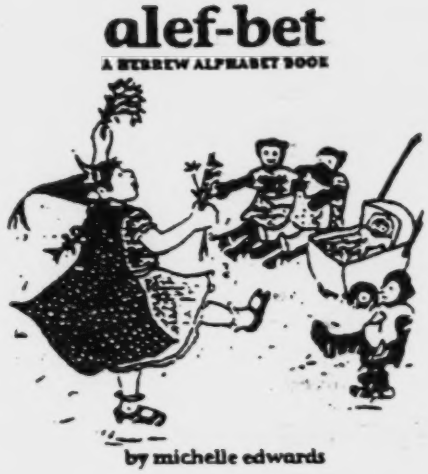
In ***SONG OF THE BUFFALO BOY*** an Amerasian girl in Vietnam faces prejudice and rather than being forced to marry against her will flees to postwar Saigon and has to live in dire poverty among the large community of homeless Amerasians who desperately wait for a chance to go to the US. In the end she is joined by her true love - the buffalo boy - and she decides to make a life in Vietnam.

Adolescents enjoy novels that are in a "letter" or diary format because they focus on inner feelings and motivations ,which is what young people are wrestling with as they mature.

In ***LETTERS FROM A SLAVE GIRL*** students (gr.7+) will read about Harriet Jacobs, who , against the odds, learned to read and write. Her letters, from a young age, to absent family members are never sent, but serve to release he r feelings. To escape the sexual harassment from her white master, she goes into hiding for seven years! When she is able eventually to escape north, she becomes an ardent abolitionist, writes her autobiography, and gets her freedom through the aid of some generous friends. An inside look at slavery

LETTERS FROM RIFKA, (a shorter and easier book) is about a Jewish girl's odyssey to freedom after her family escapes the persecution in Russia in the 1920s. Because of sickness Rifka is left behind in Holland for a year when her parents leave for America, and when she arrives at Ellis Island, she still has a long wait in hospital before being permitted to enter the country. Through all the hardships and loneliness she communicates her thoughts to her friend on the pages of a Pushkin book of poems. (Full buying details in LIST)





alef-bet uses the Hebrew script, phonetic pronunciation, and English translation for each of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and the words that accompany them. The simple illustrations built around one family provide the definitions.(One of the children is in a wheelchair.)

A TO ZEN; is a colorful alphabet book which reads from back to front and right to left! The attractive Japanese script is used, along with the English translation. The pictures and brief English text provide the definition for the 22 words, many of which will be familiar. eg.ORIGAMI
(See List for buying information)
Use - Teachers can blow up, cut out, mount and display some of the scripts and words.

Editor: Gloria D. Jackson
Layout/Graphics: Lynn Clark
Copyright.

The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage the use of culturally diverse books in K-8 schools,by reviewing new books, suggesting curricular activities, and discussing issues surrounding this literature.

COMMENTARY

Put the Accent on Access - A Letter to Librarians

How easy is it to find multicultural literature in your library?

You can look in the catalog, but in most libraries novels are not given subject headings. Generally speaking picture books are not given cultural subject headings by Dewey, LC or in CIP.

Even when subject headings are assigned, the frequent changing of cultural labels gives rise to confusion and frustration.

Also, multicultural fiction books are not usually kept together or identified by spine label.

A teacher wanting to infuse cultural literature into the subject curriculum needs to find books that apply - and find them in a hurry!

Here are some suggestions for librarians to clear the path so **access to multicultural books is made easy.** Use a multiethnic committee of parents,teachers and students to help you decide and work on any of the following ideas.

For the Catalog

1. Create an "authority list" of cultural labels that are in use currently by the students and community.
2. Decide on the one you will use or have used in your catalog and refer all other terms that may be used, back to this one. eg. the EUREKA online computer has this-
[LATINOS US is not used in this catalog HISPANIC AMERICANS is used instead]
3. Don't just depend on CIP (cataloging in publication) but assign a cultural subject heading to ALL multicultural picture books and fiction.
4. Create your own cultural labels. Don't be tied down to LC or Dewey which still use outmoded terms like INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA, and AFRO-AMERICANS.
5. For libraries with online cataloging, examine descriptive summaries to be sure they include cultural labels, so that these can be caught in "keyword searches".
6. Post a large sign on/near the catalog listing the cultural headings that are used.

For Shelving

1. Discuss the value of putting all picture books and easy reading fiction that has cultural content in a separate, highly visible, well marked shelving area. Involve the teachers and students in making the area attractive with cultural artifacts, posters, maps,children's drawings etc.

2 .Put a generic multicultural identification on all novels with cultural content. (eg. spine label with a picture of a globe)

In 1 & 2 remember to include ALL ethnicities (including Anglo-European) and global cultures.

3. Put the year of publication on the spine label of all multicultural fiction and picture books. This is important since recent books are more sensitive to cultural facts and nuances than the old patronizing and stereotypical books. (Actually, pre-1970 titles should be examined for possible discard!)

Send in other ideas you have used.

Not Recommended

TEN LITTLE RABBITS by Virginia Grossman, illus. Sylvia Long. Chronicle Bks. 1992 Though this counting book is handsomely illustrated and has already garnered some awards I am not alone in disliking it. Rabbits dressed up in various articles of Native American clothing and engaged in traditional activities count their way through the pages. If the cultural intent was to improve on the stereotypical "ten little Indians" then the publishers must be commended. But is it progress to replace the human stereotype with *animals* Surely not! There are detailed notes at the back describing the traditional weaving patterns shown, but will young children understand their significance? Will primary teachers try to explain them? And what's the use of authentic costumes if the object wearing them is not authentic - for Indians are not rabbits - and it is a parody to make them so!

ENCOUNTER by Jane Yolen. Illus. David Shannon HBJ 1992

It is unfortunate that this brave venture into revisionist history should be so overlaid with fearful messages that negate its value for young children.

The picture book tells the story of the arrival of Columbus, the greed of his party, and the betrayal of the Indians, as seen through the eyes of a Taino boy. The full page illustrations are very beautiful, but emphasise the color differences between the fairskinned, blue-eyed strangers, and the darker skinned black-haired Taino Indians. The scary dream of the boy forebodes the evil actions of the strangers - and it comes true! Children will recognise how the generosity of the Tainos were exploited by the greed of the visitors, and they will feel the betrayal as the Spaniards took slaves and sailed away.

This is all true, historically. But the message to young children - for whom the picture book is intended - is one of fear. Be afraid of anyone who is of a different color to you! Watch out, your worst dreams could come true! Don't trust your friends, they can betray you! The final picture of an old, acculturated Indian in torn western clothes, sitting dejectedly on a stump and looking out to sea sends a message of hopelessness.

A long Author's Note at the end gives the history regarding this "encounter". But how much of it can be explained to young children? Because Jane Yolen has such excellent credentials as an author, and because of its cultural content, this book will probably be widely purchased. But teachers should weigh all factors judiciously when considering its use.

Recommended List of Recent K-8 Multicultural Literature

No list of books stands alone. Please use this along with other published lists and publishers catalogs etc. This list represents recent titles (almost all 1992) that I have received from publishers and sought out from other sources. Some titles have been critically reviewed in previous issues of THE MIRROR and all titles have been reviewd by me and/or advisory committee members.There are, of course, many other recent books 'out there;' that I have not been able to get or review. And there are some that I have read but could not recommend.

Non-fiction books are generally absent not only because of time limitations, but mainly because I feel that "literature" is most effective in reaching emotions and teaching attitudes and this is how multicultural communications can best be affected.

The List reflects the marketplace in that African American books outnumber any other single minority. But it should be remembered that minority culture books have themes that are common to most disadvantaged groups as well as universal themes.

NOTES:

Ethnic authors & illustrators have been marked >> when their ethnicity is known

Prices have not been included since these can vary according to binding and source

Grade level appropriateness for reading and content should be stretched according to teacher use and student need.

Ethnic identification is provided [see "Abbreviations"] but should not be the only criterion for purchase. Try not to limit your selections only to the cultures represented in your school or classroom.

The Index at the end provides thematic entry to encourage using these books within teaching units.

1. **AGAINST THE STORM** Hicyilmar, Gaye: Little Brown 1990
Contemporary novel set in Turkey about a boy's tough experiences when his family moves from the village to the city. **Gr.7/ MidEast**

2. **AHYOKA AND THE TALKING LEAVES.** Roop, Peter and Connis Illus. Yoshi Miyake: Lothrop 1992
Easy reading, fact-based story of how Ahyoka helped her father Sequoyah to create the Cherokee written language.r **Gr.2-5/AmInd**

3. **AJEEMAH AND HIS SON**
Berry, James author/illus. HarperCollins 1992
Well-written short book revealing the feelings and experiences of father and son as they were kidnapped in Africa and spent their lives as slaves in Jamaica. **Gr.6-8/AA**

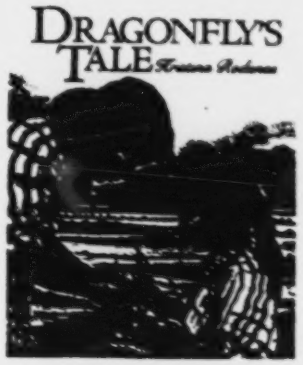
4. **alef-bet: A HEBREW ALPHABET BOOK.** Edward, Michelle: Lothrop 1992
A simple introduction to Hebrew script, words and some traditions. BILINGUAL **Gr.1-3/Jewish**

5. **ALICE** >>Goldberg, Whoopi Illus. John Reeves: Bantam hardcover 1992
A take-off on Alice in Wonderland, set in New York city and told in true Whoopi-style! Good READALOUD.Illustrated **Gr. 3+/AA**

6. **AMAZING GRACE.** Hoffman, Mary: Dial Bks/Young Readers; 1991Colorful and expressive studies of young Grace who believes she can do whatever she puts her mind to..and..she does get the part of Peter Pan in school production! **Gr.K-3/AA**

7. **ASHOK; BY ANY OTHER NAME**
Yamate, Sandra. Illus. Janice Tohinaka :Polychrome Pub. 1992
East Indian boytries to change his name to fit in with American peers, but eventually realizes he should be proud of it instead. **Gr.1-3/E.Ind**

8. **AUNT FLOSSIE'S HATS [AND CRAB CAKES LATER]**>>Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald and James Ransome: Clarion 1991
Attractive pictures of two sisters and their Aunt Flossie, who tells stories about the hats she likes to wear. **Gr.K-2/AA**



9. **CHINGIS KHAN** Demi, author & illus. Holt: 1991 PB
Sophisticated illustrations and text tell the true story of Chingis Khan, from childhood to his rise to powerful ruler. **Gr.2-4/AS**

10. **DANCING WITH INDIANS**
>>Medearis, Angela; Illus. Samuel Burd: Holiday 1991
Black family visits the Seminote pow-wow and recalls how slave ancestor was befriended and lived with this tribe in 1862. **Gr.K-2/AmInd/AA**

11 **DIEGO RIVERA; ARTIST OF THE PEOPLE.** Neimark, Anne E; HarperCollins 1992
Excellent biography of this Mexican muralist from interesting childhood through international fame, political activity and personal relationships. Illustrated with pictures of some murals and list of their locations. **Gr.6-8/Lat**

12. **DRAGONFLY'S TALE.** Rodanas, Kristina author/illus. Clarion 1992 PB
Zuni legend of village that was stricken with drought because of wasted corn, and how two children helped the land to blossom again. **Gr.1-3/AmInd**

Recommended List of Recent K-8 Multicultural Literature

13. **DRYLONGSO** >>Hamilton, Virginia illus.>>Jerry Pinkney. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich(HBJ) 1992
Well-illustrated longer picture book about the drought in the midwest in the 70s, and the boy who uses a divining rod to bring relief to a family.
Gr.3-5/AA

14. **EL CHINO** >>Say, Allen. Author/ illus. Houghton 1990
Outstanding picture book based on the true story of Am-Chinese immigrant who became a famous matador in Spain. Exciting illustrations. **Gr.2-5/AS**

15. ELIJAH'S ANGEL; A STORY FOR CHANUKAH AND CHRISTMAS >>Rosen, Michael illus.>>Aminah Robinson HBJ 1992 Contemporary picture book about friendship between a black woodcarver and Jewish boy, who exchange gifts. True life story.
Gr. 2-5/AA/Jewish

16. **EVERYBODY COOKS RICE**
Dooley, Norah and Peter Thornton; Carolrhoda 1991 (non-fiction)
Simple pictures follow a child visiting homes in a multi-ethnic neighborhood at dinner time and tasting the different rice dishes. Recipes given.
Gr. 1-5/Cross cultural

17. **FINDING MY VOICE** >>Lee, Marie; Houghton 1992 High school Korean-American girl comes to grips with culture-conflict at home, discrimination at school and adolescent independence.
Gr. 7+ /AS

18. **THE FORTUNETELLERS**
Alexander, Lloyd; illus. Trina Schart Hyman. Dutton 1992
Well-illustrated, hilarious picture book about a poor carpenter in Africa who becomes a rich fortuneteller - by default!
Gr. 1-3/African

19. **THE GIRL WHO CHANGED HER FATE.** Marshall, Laura, author/illus. Atheneum 1992
Greek folktale tells of adventures of youngest daughter who takes the responsibility of removing the bad fate that was dealt to her family. **Gr.2-4**

20. **THE GIRL WHO LOVED CATERPILLARS; A 12TH CENTURY TALE FROM JAPAN.**
Merrill, Jean adaptor; illus. Floyd Cooper; Philomen/Putnam 1992 Independent young woman is more interested in insects than in marrying a nobleman! Nice science slant. **Gr.2-5/Japan**

21. **THE GOLD COIN** >>Flor Ada, Alma, illus. Neil Waldman: Atheneum 1991 Original story showing how a thief, following a helpful old woman, is transformed by her goodness and in the end assists rather than robs her. **Gr. 1-3/ Lat**

22. **THE GOLDEN BEAR.** Young, Ruth illus. Rachel Isadora; Viking 1992
Pictures of winsome child and same-size teddy bear, make this little rhyming song (with music score included) a big hit with preschoolers. **Gr.ps-1 /AA**

23. **THE GOLDEN DEER** Hodges, Margaret; illus. by Daniel San Souci; Scribner 1992 Classic Jataka tale of the Banyan Deer willing to sacrifice himself for the good of the herd. **Gr.1-4/EInd**

24. **GOODBYE VIETNAM** Whelan, Gloria; Knopf 1992
A harrowing tale of a teenage girl and her family escaping from Vietnam to Hong Kong where they board a plane for the US.
Gr.6+/AS

25. **THE HEAVENLY HORSE**
Hassall, Neil, illus. Maureen Hyde; Green Tiger /SS 1992 PB
Poor Chinese boy travels to improve his life and learns how to discriminate between real and transitory values
Gr.K-3/China

26. **THE INVISIBLE THREAD; AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY** >>Uchida, Yoshiko Messner 1991
Life and work of Yoshiko and how she explored her Japanese roots.
Gr.5-8/AS

27. **ISLAND BABY** Keller, Holly Greenwillow 1992
Bright colors, strong shapes grace this simple picture books about a toung child rescuing and nurturing an injured flamingo. **Gr.ps-2/AA**

28. **THE JOURNEY OF MENG**
Rappaport, Doreen. illus. >>Yang Ming Yi; Dial 1991 PB Story tied to Great Wall of China, tells of how brave wife embarked on a tragic quest to ave her husband.. **Gr.2-4/China**

29. **JUST LIKE MARTIN** >>Davis, Ossie Simon & Schuster 1992
Exciting "I-was-there" novel reliving the civil rights events of the early 60s; narrator is 14-yr-old African American boy
Gr. 7-9/AA

30. **KEEPERS OF THE ANIMALS; NATIVE AMERICAN STORIES AND WILDLIFE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN.** Caduto, Michael >>Bruchac, Joseph Fulcrum Pubs.Colorado. 1991
Good resource book with many science activities. Companion books with additional folktales. **RESOURCE / AmInd**

31. **KISS THE DUST.** Laird, Elizabeth; Dutton 1992
Exciting, contemporary novel of wealthy Kurdish girl and family's hazardous escape from Iran, to Iraqi refugee camps and finally to London. **Gr.7+/MidEast**

32. **THE LAST PRINCESS; THE STORY OF PRINCESS KAIULANI OF HAWAII.** Stanley, Fay and Diane. Four Winds 1991
Long picture book ties in the life of Princess Kaiulani with the betrayal of her country by American business and government. Historical content.**Gr.4-6**

Recommended List of Recent K-8 Multicultural Literature

33. **LEAVING FOR AMERICA**
Bresnick, Perry illus.Mira Reisberg
Children's Bk. Pr. 1992
Author remembers her childhood in Russia (1920s) before she came to the US to join her father. Happy story. Simple pictures.
Gr.K-3/Russian

35. **LETTERS TO RIFKA** >>Hesse, Karen Holt 1992
Letters reveal the experiences of Jewish girl escaping Russia, being held in Europe for a years, and then at Ellis Island for months before being allowed to enter the US. **Gr.5-8/Jewish**

36. **LETTERS FROM A SLAVE GIRL. THE STORY OF HARRIET JACOBS**
Lyons, Mary; Scribners 1992
Based on Jacob's autobiography (1861] the fictional letters tell her experiences starting when she was 12, and include her seven years in hiding and eventual escape to freedom. **Gr.6+ /AA**

37. **LITTLE BROTHER.** Baillie, Allan; Viking 1992 pbk
Rousing story of young Vithy;s escape from the Khmer Rouge labor camp after the Vietnam war. **Gr. 5-8/AS**

38. **LONG IS A DRAGON; CHINESE WRITING FOR CHILDREN.**
Goldstein, Peggy; China Bks & Periodicals, SF; 1991
Introduces 75 Chinese characters explaining how pictures influence the word forms. **Gr. 3-7/Chinese**

39. **THE LOVE FLUTE.** Goble, Paul author/illus. Bradbury Pr. 1992
Plains Indian legend showing why the love flute is so important in courtship customs. Good background notes. Stylish & authentic illustrations.
Gr.3-6/AmInd

40. **MAMA DO YOU LOVE ME?**
Joose, Barbara M. illus Barbara Lavallee Chronicle Bks. 1992. Inuit child asks mother - Would you love me IF...with realistic but reassuring answers from mother showing unrestrictive love. Lavish art. Ethnic alternative to the RUNAWAY BUNNY. **Gr. ps-1 /AmInd**

41. **MARIA; A CHRISTMAS STORY.** Taylor, Theodore HBJ 1992. In this short book we read about the Gonzaga family Christmas float which was born in envy, nurtured with pride, produced in desperation, and remembered for a generation. Their Mexican-American Nativity scene won the prize against all odds and is re-enacted each year in remembrance, at the San Lazaro Christmas parade. This small gem of 96 pages brings smiles and tears and an understanding of ethnic pride.
Gr. 4-7 /Lat READALOUD all ages HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

42. **A MILLION FISH MORE OR LESS.>>**McKissack, Patricia illus,. Dena Schutzer. Knopf 1991 PB
Tall tale from the South is told in storytelling style. Young boy matches the "fish stories" of the old timers! Illustrations encourage art activities.
Gr.K-2/AA

43 **MORNING GIRL .>>**Dorris, Michael Hyperion 1992
Simple life of a Taino family and community is told through the eyes of two children.[SEE REVIEW in this issue]
Gr. 4-7/AmInd

44. **MY NAME IS SAN HO.** Pettit, Jayne; Scholastic 1992
Realistic story of young boy's difficult escape from a wartorn Vietnamese village and his experiences making a new life with an American stepfather in the US.
Gr.6-9/AS

45. **NEIGHBORHOOD ODES** >>Soto, Gary HBJ 1992
Short and long poems reflecting author's Latino youth, and touching everyday experiences with humor and beauty.
Gr.5-8/Lat

46. **NIGHT ON NEIGHBORHOOD STREET** >>Greenfield, Eloise. illus.Jan Spivey; Dial 1991 PB
Short, realistic, reassuring poems about living with love and trust in a black community. **Gr.K-3/AA**

47. **ONE MORE RIVER TO CROSS; THE STORIES OF TWELVE BLACK AMERICANS.** >>Haskins, Jim; Scholastic 1992
The biographies (about 16p each) have a lot of action, good description and confront discrimination honestly.
Gr. 5-8/AA

Recommended List of Recent K-8 Multicultural Literature

48. **PACIFIC CROSSING** >>Soto, Gary HBJ 1992
Two Latino boys from California go to Japan on an exchange visit, have new experiences and share their own culture. **Gr.5-7/Lat/Cross cultural**

49. **PASS IT ON; AI RICAN-AMERICAN POETRY FOR CHILDREN.** Hudson, Wade illus.>>Floyd Cooper. Scholastic 1993
Selected poems by top black poets - Hughes, Giovanni, Dunbar etc.
Full and double page illustrations reflect the content and feeling of the words. **Gr.K-3+/AA**

50. **A PICTURE BOOK OF SIMON BOLIVAR.** Adler, David illus. Robert Casilla; Holiday House 1992
Biography of the Creole often called the Second Washington of the New World because he spent his life in wars to liberate South American countries from Spain. Factual, well-illustrated - with maps, chronology. **Gr.3-6/Lat**

51. **ROSES SING ON NEW SNOW; A DELICIOUS TALE.**>>Yee, Paul illus. >>Harvey Chan; Macmillan 1991 PB
Assertive girl cook in Chinatown, early 1900s, shows that even when two people use the same ingredients the resulting dishes can be different!Shows the value of uniqueness. **Gr.2-5/AS**

52. **THE ROUGH FACE GIRL.** Martin, Rafe illus.David Shannon; Putnam 1992
Picture book with Cinderella motif but culture
specific.Independent girl overcomes physical ugliness and wins the prize, emerges as beautiful as the person within. Good for storytelling.**Gr.2-4/AmInd**

53. **THE SABBATH LION.** Schwartz, Howard & Barbara Rush illus. Stephen Fieser; HarperCollins 1992 PB
Yosef keeps the Sabbath despite being left alone in the desert, but a Lion is sent to guard and help him achieve his goal. **Gr. K-3/Mideast/Jewish**

54. **SAMI AND THE TIME OF TROUBLES** Heide, Florence and Judith Gilliland illus. Ted Lewin; Clarion 1992 PB Pictures show children and families in Lebanon living under war conditions. There is danger and anxiety, but life goes on in the spaces of peace. **Gr.3-5 / Mideast**

55. **THE SAMURAI'S DAUGHTER**
San Souci, Robert illus. Stephen Johnson; Dial 1992 PB
Set in medieval Japan the story tells of a young woman who uses her skill as a diver to save her father. **Gr.1-3/Japan**

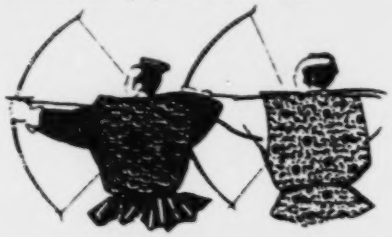
56. **SAVE MY RAIN FOREST.** Zak, Monica and Runnerstrom. Volcano Press, CA 1992 PB True story of young boy's amazing journey to try and save Mexico's last rain forest. Well illustrated and documented. **Gr. 2-5/Lat.**

57. **SENEFER; A YOUNG GENIUS IN OLD EGYPT.** Africa World Press Inc.,Trenton, NJ. 1992
Pictures and text describe the childhood of Senefer, one of Egypt's greatest mathematicians and builders. **Gr.4-8/Africa**

58. SHORTCUT >>Donald Crews Greenwillow 1992. Colorful double-page pictures and few words give a strong safety message about not walking or playing on railroad tracks. **Gr.ps-2/AA**

59.THE SLEEPING BREAD. Czernecki, Stefan and Timothy Rhodes; Hyperion 1992 PB People in a Guatemalan town banish a poor old man, and then find that the bread at the bakery won't rise. When the invte the old man back all is solved! Gr. K-2/Lat

61. **SONG OF THE BUFFALO BOY**
Garland, Sherry HBJ 1992
see review (page 1) **Gr. 7+/AS**



62. **THE STORY OF YURIKAWA; A JAPANESE ODYSSEY.** Haugaard, Erik and Masako illus.Birgitta Saflund 1991
Well-written tale, parallel to myth of Odysseus, but with cultural and historical flavor of medieval Japan. **Gr.4-7/Japan**

63. **TALKING WALLS.** Knight, Margy Burns illus. Anne Sibley O'Brien; Tilbury House 1992. PB
Brief texts and illustrations of old and new walls around the world, and their significance. Pictures show children of many cultures. Fosters research activities. **Gr.3-6/Cross cultural**

64. **TEARS FOR ASHAN>>**Marie, D[pseud] illus. Norman Childres Creative Press Works, Memphis, TN 1992 2nd prtg. PB Simple pictures and text tell of village life in Africa and how young Kumasi felt when his friend Ashan was kidnapped and taken away to be a slave. **Gr. 1-3/AA**

65. **THREE WISHES** >>Clifton, Lucille illus.Michael Hays; Doubleday 1992 PB
Nobie finds a lucky penny and unwittingly makes three wishes that come true. Contemporary story with values. Good alternative to traditional 'three wishes' tales. Lovely art. **Gr.2-4/AA**

66. **TIGER.** Allen, Judy illus. Tudor Humphries; Candlewick Pr. 1992
A local hunter stalks a tiger that is menacing a South China village and shoots it - with his camera! Culture-specific and lovely illustrations setting, people and tiger. **Gr. 2-4/AS**

Recommended List of Recent K-8 Multicultural Literature

67. **A TO ZEN; A BOOK OF JAPANESE CULTURE.** Wells, Ruth illu.>>Yoshi; Picture Bk. Studio 1992 Unusual and informative picture book introducing Japanese script and words (kimono, origami etc.) and reading back to front and right to left.
Gr.1-3/Bilingual/Japan

68. **TONGUES OF JADE** >>Yep, Laurence illus. David Wiesner HarperCollins 1991 A collection of Chinese folktales transplanted to and affected by the New World. Yep enriches the book with his explanations. **Gr.5-8/ China/AS**

69. **TREE OF CRANES.** >>Say, Allen, Houghton 1991 PB Good "reverse-culture" story of American mother living in Japan, importing her California Christmas customs for her bi-racial child. Excellent, Japanese culture-specific pictures.
Gr.1-3/Cross cultural/Japan

70. **WHAT KIND OF BABY-SITTER IS THIS?** Johnson, Dolores author/illus. 1991 Young Kevin does not want another babysitter, especially the granmother who shows up - until he finds out she loves baseball as much as he does!
Gr. K-2/AA

71. **WOMAN WHO OUTSHONE THE SUN; THE LEGEND OF LUCIA ZENTENO.** >>Martinez, Alejandro Cruz Children's Bk Pr. 1991 PB A beautiful stranger with unusual powers is banished from the village, then the river dries up. The people invite her back and the river flows again.
Gr. 1-4/Lat

72. **THE YEAR THEY WALKED; ROSA PARKS AND THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT.** Siegel, Beatrice; Four Winds Pr. 1992 Well written book showing Rosa Parks' contribution to the Civil Rights movement. **Gr.5-7/AA**

73. **YOU'RE MY NIKKI.** Eisenberg, Phyllis Rose, illusJill Kastner; Dial Bks for Young Readers 1992 Young child needds assurance when her mother starts a full time job. Contemporary, cultural alternative to RUNAWAY BUNNY. Gr. ps-1/AA

34. **MOON ROPE; UN LAZO A LA LUNA** Ehlert, Lois. Translator Amy Pince; HBJ 1992 Arresting art dominated by oversized, stylised animals in primary colors and silver, tells the story of the friends Fox and Mole who attempted to climb to the moon.
Gr. ps-1/Bilingual/Lat

Now Available in Paperback

THE DEFEAT AND TRIUMPH OF A FUGITIVE SLAVE by Virginia Hamilton. Knopf Borzoi Sprinter Jan. 1993 ISBN 0-679-83997-6 $3.99 This biography, first published in 1988, explores the slavery issue and how the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 galvanized public and legal opinion in the free states against slavery. Recommended for classroom study in Literature/Social Studies - grades 7-8.* Send for the excellent Teachers Guide written by Dr. Stanek, that appeared in Paperback Power, Winter 1993.* Random House, Inc., 225 Park Ave.,South, New York, NY 10003
Gr. 5-8 / AA U.S. History

Subject Index Recommended List

Art	11
Civil rights	29
Coming of age	1,17,29
Community	46,41,
Cross cultural	10,15,16,48
Culture conflict	17,26
"Different" is OK	7,11,14,17,19,20, 41,44,48,52,59,71
Ecology	27,56,66
Escape to freedom	24,31,33,35,37,44
Family	40, 41,43,44,54,61, 69,70,7273,75
Friends	22,33,34,35,61,64, 65
Humor	5,8,18,42,51
Immigrants	7,14,17,24,33,35,44
Languages	2,4,38,67
Music	22,39
Math	57
Poems	45,46,49,59
Science	12,13,20,27,30,56,66
Self esteem	6,7,14
Slavery	3,36,64
Strong Women	17,19,20,24,28,,51,55
U.S.History	2,3,10,13,29,32 36,43,47,72
Values	21,23,25,52,53,58,60,71
World History	9,24,37,54,63, 31,37,50,57

33

Biographical stories - Total 10

Contemporary stories - Total 29

Folktales & Legends - Total 20

ABBREVIATIONS :
AA - African American
AS - Asian
AmInd - American Indian
EInd - East Indian
Lat - Latino
MidEast -Middle Eastern
PB - Paperback

Resource Books

LANGUAGE ARTS THROUGH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE by Flor Ada, Alma and Rosalma Zubizarreta. Children's Book Press 1989

Latina author and university professor introduces "creative dialog", an effective and unique approach to teaching multicultural and bilingual children's books.

OUR FAMILY, OUR FRIENDS, OUR WORLD: An annotated guide to significant multicultural books for children and teenagers. 710p. Bowker 1992 ISBN 0-8352-3025-2. Excellent source for fiction and non-fiction K-12 books, most of which were published within the last five years. Arranged by ethnic minority categories (African Americans; Asian Americans; Hispanic Americans; Native Americans) and by countries of the world (including Europe etc.) Good introductory chapters on multicultural literature - use, publishing history, evaluative criteria. Books have annotations and critical reviews - 12-20 lines each title. Well indexed. Lists publishers addresses, including small presses.

Multicultural Review (periodical) Greenwood Publishing Group Inc. 88 Post Rd. W.,P.O.Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-5007 Annual subscription $59.00

The issue I reviewd had over 100 pages and was filled with excellent articles relating to multicultural books,magazines, media and issues for adults and children.

EMIERT Bulletin, (Ethnic Materials and Information Exchange Round Table) Issued Quarterly. Order from ALA/ EMIERT, 50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611
$10.00 Individual subsrciption for non-ALA member.

Information ,events, reviews of ethnic materials.

Interracial Books for Children Bulletin, 8 times a year; $28.00 Institutional subscription $20.00 Individual subscription.
Council on Interracial Books for Children 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

Critical reviews, and relevant articles.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The terms used for ethnic categories change frequently,but catalog systems and government reports are slow to respond. Here is some information that may help you decide on your entries.
Though LC Catalogs use - AFRO-AMERICANS, HISPANICS, AND INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA, the favored terms in the community at this time seem to be - AFRICAN AMERICANS, LATINOS, AMERICAN INDIANS or NATIVE AMERICANS, ASIAN AMERICANS, PACIFIC ISLANDERS, or ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS. The Canadian term INDO-AMERICANS may be coming into use for East Indians.And does anyone have an umbrella term for immigrants from the Middle East?
The "Definitions of Subject Characteristics" in the 1990 Census Report gives a detailed breakdown of ethnic groups that fall under various categories.

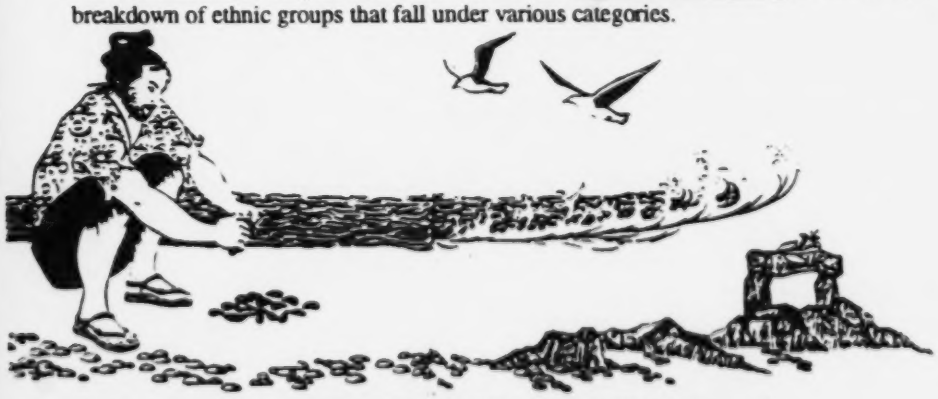


Illustration taken from THE STORY OF YURIKAWA/ Haugaard

GRACIAS

Many thanks to the following educators and parents from the Advisory Committee who provided valuable input to this Issue: Joan Ainslie, Rose Bocanegra, Carmen Hernandez, Moonyene Lew, Kathy Ordaz, Nancy Ordiz, Barbie Ross, Ruth Seo.
I am also most grateful to Judy Green, Terry Chekon and Linda Jewett for generously sharing new books.

NOTES

THE MIRROR has increased its membership across the country - thanks to the generous publicity through BOOK LINKS, BOOK REPORT, LIBRARY TALK, and CMLEA Newsletter. Individual and Group subscriptions have been received from 22 states, including Hawaii, and also from Canada! The Editor feelsthat this is evidence that the Newsletter is speaking to a very present need in the schools.

BACK ISSUES

A few requests have come in for back issues of THE MIRROR. Four Newsletters were issued last year - December 1991, January '92, March '92, May '92. Each issue is four pages. If you are interested send your request, labeled BACK ISSUES, along with a check for $4.00 to the editor. Address below.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

THE MIRROR issues three newsletters annually.. New subscribers will receive the FALL 92 and WINTER 93 issues as well as the upcoming SPRING 93 issue.
Subscriptions are-
Individual - $5.00: Group - $25.00
Group subscription includes permission to copy all or parts of the Newsletter for distribution within a non-profit educational institution or program.
Subscriptions should be sent to:
Gloria Jackson ,Editor
THE MIRROR, 45 Moonlit Circle, Sacramento, CA 95831

The Mirror

A Newsletter for K-8 educators and parents

Spring 1993

No.87

Reflecting Culturally Diverse Children's Books

Reviewed in this Issue

Abuela's Weave / Castenada
Africa brothers and sisters / Kroll
Aunt Elaine does the Dance from Spain / Komaiko
Baseball saved us / Lee
Boy becomes a Man at Wounded Knee / Wood
Chevrolet Saturdays / Dawson Boyd
Echoes of the White Giraffe / Choi
Feast for 10 / Falwell
Get on Board / Haskins
Haveli / Staples
Honey Hunters / Martin
If it hadn't been for Yoon Jun / Lee
Jonathan and his Mommy / Smalls-Hector
Lost Children / Goble
Lotus Seed / Garland
Many Thousand Gone / Hamilton
Nev Shalom/Wahat Al-Salaam / Dolphin
Real McCoy / Towle
Red Thread / Young
Righteous Revenge of Artemis Bonner / Myers
Sparrow Hawk Red / Mikaelsen
Sunita Experiment / Perkins
Vejigante Masquerader/Delacre
Walls of Pedro Garcia / McColley

Editor: Gloria D. Jackson
Layout: Lynn Clark

Copyright

The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage the use of culturally diverse books in K-8 schools, by reviewing new books, suggesting curricular activities, and discussing issues surrounding this literature.

Multicultural books enter the mainstream !

Here is some good news!
More multicultural books are being published by national publishers.
Some new publishers are concentrating on minority culture books.
Multicultural literature is entering the mainstream!
This is what I mean -

Though these books have characters and/or settings that relate to a specific culture or more than one culture, their main attraction lies in a story that appeals to all readers. Candy Dawson Boyd was an early proponent of this point of view, and her books bear this out. This diffusing of cultural priority should not be confused with the kind of generic books that were written a decade ago to pay lip service to multiculturalism. In evaluating the integrity of such books the ethnicity and research/experience of the author is of great importance.

When I asked the award- winning black author Patricia McKissack what she thought about cross-cultural ør mainstream- multicultural books she immediately replied, "But there is still so much I need to know about *my own* culture!"There will always be a great need for books whose priority is to give specific information on and insight into a particular culture. This is the kind of fiction and non-fiction that McKissack, Hamilton, Soto, Uchida and others have written so well.

The books reviewed in this issue include both kinds of multicultural literature Many of them are set in the United States with attractive main characters belonging to minority cultures, but their appeal is in their plots. Attention is still paid to the internal and external culture conflicts, but as part of the common coming-of-age experience. I feel this trend will make multicultural books more accepted by teenagers. Through this avenue of story, they will get a better understanding of their own and other cultures.

This is the last issue of THE MIRROR.
It is with mixed feelings that I announce this,
because it has been a wonderful challenge to create this Newsletter.
However, the work is too arduous to continue alone successfully.
I am most grateful
for the support of the many librarians who encouraged me to start this service -
for the response from around the country in the form of your subscriptions -
for the exhilarating discussions with my local multicultural review committee -
for the generosity of publishers who sent books to review -
for the patience and understanding of my husband -
and for the excellent technical services provided by my daughter.

I will continue my interest in this exciting field of literature
by writing some articles and freelance reviews,
and by using these books with children.

Understanding, Overcoming, Accepting

CHEVROLET SATURDAYS by Candy Dawson Boyd Macmillan 1993 176p ISBN 0-02-711765-0

The author has often pointed out that her novels are primarily good stories that reflect and appeal to, the average young teenager. They also happen to be peopled by African American characters, and as such provide identification with and respect for that culture.

In this story Joey, is unhappy that he has not been accepted for the gifted program at school though he is a good student. (The classroom scenes are very authentic.) He is also having trouble accepting his mother's divorce, and his new stepfather (who is a fine character).He gets advice from the old pharmacist, Doc, who tells him that he must learn to work out his problems if he wants "to become a solid African-American man who walks this world with his head on straight"

A turning point occurs when Joey loses his stepfather's dog. He takes the responsibility of finding the dog, and paying for its injuries. Meanwhile Mr. Johnson buys a chevrolet to get his construction business going, and gets Joey interested in it. By the end of the novel Joey accepts his stepfather.

This is a fine family and coming-of-age story. It is not stereotypical, but presents an "against-the-grain" model for African American boys who are often pressured by peers to turn their backs on school which is the "white man's world". I really loved this book, and the kids will too.

Gr. 5-8

Reviewed by Barbara Ross, Middle School librarian.

שָׁלוֹם
shah-LOM

سلام
sah-LAHM

NEV SHALOM / WAHAT AL-SALAAM; OASIS OF PEACE by Laurie Dolphin; photographed by Ben Dolphin. Scholastic 1993 ISBN 0-590-45799-3

Attractive color photographs and simple text tell the true stories of a Jewish boy, Shlomki, and a Muslim boy,Muhammad, both ten years old, who are citizens of Israel, and live in separate villages not far from each other. Their parents want peace between the two races, and they send the children each day to a special school in the Oasis of Peace village.

The teachers and students of this bilingual grade school include Jews and Moslems. The purpose is to defuse the fear between the races through information and friendship. By the end of the book Shlomki and Muhammed are visiting in each others homes, and their parents are getting to know each other.

The Afterword contains factual information about the village, recent facts about the Israel; a glossary; and a Hebrew/Arabic Language comparison of thirteen common words.This is a very worthwhile book to read and discuss in class.

Gr. 4-8 Middle East
Curricular: World History

How do you know whether a person you haven't met is good or bad.
- Arn Chorn*

HAVELI by Suzanne Fisher Staples. Knopf 1993 ISBN 0-679-84157-1

This sequel to *Shahbanu* is an adult book, but high school and mature middle school readers will enjoy it. At the end of the first book, young Shahbanu submitted to tradition and reluctantly married Rahim, a rich landholder, forty years her senior.

In this sequel we see Shahbanu settled as the fourth wife of Rahim. She has a daughter Mumtaz, to whom she is devoted. Life with the extended family of wives and children is full of jealousy, intrigue and inherent danger.

As the story unfolds the incidents, suspicions and relationships inexorably build to a level of suspense, which is more sinister by not being explicit or exploding. Staples has the sharpened sensibilites of an experienced journalist and carefully reports on what is seen , heard and felt ...releasing tension frequently with the sights of the marketplace, the sense of the oppressive heat, the sound of the *muezzin* [call to prayer] floating over city , the slight tap-tap of the pet deer following Mumtaz.

The villains in the book are Amina, the first wife of Rahim, and Nazir his vicious, power-hungry brother. Shahbanu endures their open hatred with vigilance. She also wrestles with an inner conflict when she loves yet resists a man near her own age.

The explosion comes near the end of the book with violence and death. Finally she finds a measure of peace at her beloved *haveli*, the ancestral home that once knew grandeur and is now rather decrepit. It is not a fairy tale end , but this time the compromise is of her own making.

Gr 8-adult Pakistani

BASEBALL SAVED US Written by Ken Mochizuki, Illus by Dom Lee Lee and Low Books 1993 ISBN 1-880000-01-6

"One day my dad looked out at the endless desert and decided to build a baseball field" so starts this touching picture book. The location is a Japanese internment camp in Idaho, and it takes a lot of work and ingenuity before the field is completed and uniforms made (from mattress covers!)

It is here the young hero hones his skills, and makes the final winning swing that brings him to homeplate, and the "thumbs-up sign" from the American guard on the watch tower. When he returns to the city after the war, he still finds discrimination but his skill at baseball wins him respect and friends.

This"baseball" story introduces children to the historical reality of discrimination and internment. The illustrations are in shades of browns, reflecting the arid desert location, but they come to life with the baseball action depicted. The author's parents were in an internment camp in Idaho in 1942

Gr. 3-5+ Japanese American
Curricular -US History **Read also** *Journey to Topaz* / Uchida

School Days ... School Friends

THE SUNITA EXPERIMENT by Mitali Perkins. Little Brown 1993 179p ISBN 0-316-69943-8

Middle school students struggle with creating their own identity, and this is especially so for children with dual cultures.

Sunita Sen is a typical American teenager preoccupied with friends, school, homework, and a budding romance with the school tennis star. Her pleasant world erupts in conflict when her middle class grandparents arrive from India for a prolonged visit. Her East Indian mother then reverts to wearing sarees instead of jeans and cooking curries instead of sending out for pizzas!

The culture conflict within Sunita is realistic. This excellent first novel explores the differences in the cultures presented, but emphasises the good qualities in the minority and mainstream characters that override and unite the cultures. There are some teenage villains, faint whiffs of prejudice, and many signs of adolescent impatience and rebellion. But there is also humor, friendship and family love that allows Sunita to appreciate her family roots. This carefully constructed novel can be enjoyed by teenagers of all cultures.
Gr. 6-8/ East Indian

MOON BRIDGE by Marcia Savin Scholastic 1992 231p ISBN 0-590-45873-6.

Marcia Savin presents an honest look at the hostility aimed at Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, which resulted in their evacuation from the West Coast and internment in concentration camps. The story is told from Ruthie Fox's perspective as she relates her feelings and experiences when she becomes friends with a Japanese American classmate, Mitzi Fujimoto.

On another level this is a story of school friends - their joys and mishaps,and the effect of politics and prejudice on that friendship over the years.

The Afterword gives the facts about the evacuation and internment, and is one of the few books that has the acknowledgment by the US government of the violations of basic civil liberties and constitutional rights to individuals of Japnese ancestry.
Gr. 4-8+ Japanese American
Curricular: Social Studies, Language Arts
Activities:1- Write letters from Mitzi and Ruthie 2-Report on life in an internment camp 3-Research news articles describing events of that time 4-Create a Treasure Box of significant items from the story
Reviewed by Ruth Seo, teacher

IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOON JUN by Marie G. Lee. Houghton 1993 134p ISBN 0-395-62941-1

The two main characters of this easy-reading novel about middle school friendships, boy friends, football and parties were both born in Korea, but are culturally quite different!

Alice Larsen was adopted as a baby by an American family and is now a typical, attractive, middle class teenager. Yoon Jun, is a new immigrant - pudgy, shy, lives with his mother in subsidized housing, and does not speak English well. Through most of the book Alice repudiates this common heritage and avoids Yoon Jun. When they are paired by lottery to work on a report they choose Korea, and she becomes interested in its history.

Later Yoon Jun saves her from being hit by a speeding car. She is grateful to him and he becomes a campus hero!. {This wrap-up incident seems forced!}

The novel recognises the peer pressure to conform and reveals the serious differences that can exist *within* a culture.
Gr. 5-8 Korean-American
Activity - Discuss "accepting differences"

ECHOES OF THE WHITE GIRAFFE by Sook Nyul Choi. Houghton 1993 137p ISBN 0-395-64721-5

This sequel to *The Year of Impossible Goodbyes* focuses more on the personal experience of the heroine Sookan, than on the political conditions in Korea. She is now fifteen and with her mother and young brother she is a refugee in Pusan for two and a half years while the Korean War still rages. She lives high on a rather steep hill covered with hundreds of makeshift huts. In rainy weather access is very difficult. Yet she is happy to go freely to school and church. It is here she finds her first love - Junho. Unlike American teenagers she is not free to date, or even show special attention to the young man. But their attraction is mutual , and they challenge tradition by meeting secretly sometimes to talk together.

The war is over in 1953 and tens of thousands of refugees return to their homes. Sookan's family returns to Seoul to see their house in ruins. Her three older brothers are there but her father has died in the bombing. She enters college and gets a scholarship to study in the US. One day Junho comes to see her. They talk of times past and the future. He is planning to enter the seminary to become a priest. She is sad to say goodbye, but he says,

"Nothing will ever end; nothing ever does.
Everything good that touches our lives becomes part of us forever..."

This is a tender love story, of teenage romance in another culture, another country - different in custom, but alike in the depth of joy, longing and heartbreak.
Gr. 6-8+ Korean

Don't Miss This!
ITS OUR WORLD: Stories of young people who are making a difference by Phillip Hoose. Joy Street/Little Brown 1993 166p ISBN 0-316-37241-2

This album-size book tells the stories of fourteen young teenage activists, of many ethnicities, who took risky stands against racism and sexism; reached out to help others in the community; initiated projects to save the earth and create a safer future. Each story runs about eight pages and has photographs. A third of the book is a handbook on planning these projects. This attractive and informative book will be indispensable to teachers marshalling the idealism of youth.The starred* quotes in this newsletter are from this book.
Gr.6+ Cross cultural

Around the World and Back Again

THE LOTUS SEED by Sherry Garland, illus. by Tatsuro Kiuchi;. Harcourt 1993 ISBN 0-15-249465-0

In a flashback, an immigrant grandmother tells of her youth in Vietnam,how she stole a lotus seed from the imperial gardens of the last Emperor, how she fled after the war leaving everything but saving the lotus seed. Her young grandson has never seen a lotus flower so he steals the seed and plants it secretly.The grandmother is very sad, but in time it emerges as a beautiful flower. Then the grandmother gives each child one of the seeds. The story is beautifully told and provides insight to the feelings of immigrants

There is a good Author's Note at the end of the book briefly tracing the history of Vietnam during this century.
Gr. 1-3 Vietnamese immigrant
Activities: Science - plant seeds in class.

FEAST FOR 10 by Cathryn Falwell, author/illus. Clarion 1993 ISBN 0-395-62037-6

Most young children love the supermarket, so here is a counting book with mama and five children under 8 years old] doing their grocery shopping. There is one cart, two pumpkins, three chickens in packets, five kinds of beans, six bunches of greens etc. Then when they return home there is one car, five empty cans, six pots and pans,. nine chairs around the table and ten hungry people to feed.

The black family is portrayed very positively and all children will feel comfortable with the illustrations which are large and distinct. This is a pre-school winner!
Gr. ps-K African American
Read also *10,.9,8* by Molly Bang.
Activity - Have parents bring in grocery items. Get a child's wagon, re-enact the book in the class, letting children take turns.

AFRICA BROTHERS AND SISTERS by Virginia Kroll pictures by Vanessa French Four Winds Press 1993 ISBN 0-02-751166-9

In a simple question and answer format (between father and young son)this colorful picture book reviews the accomplishments of various African tribes. The Ibo grow the best yams, the Ashanti weave exquisite cloths, the Guere carve marvelous masks, the Djerma make gold and silver jewelry,etc.Many Africans are also teachers, engineers and businessmen in the cities.

The pastel illustrations reflect the work of the tribes, and include pictures of father and son enjoying this game of learning. Included is a full page, color map noting the locations of the tribes, and a glossary. An author's note lists additional tribes and their occupations.A book of information and pride that should be shared with all children.
Gr. 1-3+ African
Curricular - Social Studies

Anybody can be great
Because anybody can serve.
- Martin Luther King.Jr*

JONATHAN AND HIS MOMMY by Irene Smalls-Hector Illustrated by Michael Hays 1992 Little Brown

A heart-warming picture book that will be a favorite with very young children. Jonathan and his Mom go for a walk in the city - only they don't just walk! They hop, jump, dance, walk backwards, take BIG steps then little steps - all the while imagining another world and enjoying themselves regardless of how they look to others! Then they come home to bed.

The pictures are perfect for class or small group readaloud. The young mother and child are African American but the streets they walk through show many ethnicities, occupations and activities that children will recognise. Highly recommended.
Gr. PS-2 African American
Activities: Take Jonathan's kind of walk around the class. Good exercise!

ABUELA'S WEAVE by Omar S. Castaneda, Illus. by Enrique O. Sanchez Lee & Low ISBN 1-880000-00-8

In this attractive picture book Esperanza, a young girl, is being taught by her ***abuela*** [grandmother] how to weave the intricate , traditional Guatemalan patterns into the tapestries and ***huipiles*** (long blouses) they will take to market.

"Pull back hard" says Abuela, "Make ...the threads stay close, like family"

Esperanza has the responsibility of taking the goods by bus to the market in Santa Cruz . This is not easy for the young girl. But by the end of the day her handwoven goods have outsold the machine made clothing in the competing stalls.

The picture book has large, colorful illustrations, which positively reflect the Guatemalan culture in clothing, rural homes, city market scenes and especially in the gentle faces of Esperanza and her ***abuela***. The author was born in Guatemala City, and the illustrator grew up in the Domincan Republic.
Gr. 1-3 Latino
Curricular - 1- Simple weaving activity . 2 - Ask parents to bring in hand woven pieces of clothing or linen from their own culture. Notice the similarities .

Folktales and Festivals

THE LOST CHILDREN : the boys who were neglected. by Paul Goble. Bradbury 1993

This story from the Blackfoot nation is about the Pleiades - the Bunched Stars. In the legend seven orphan boys were starved and ridiculed by their tribe. So they went to the Above World and asked to become stars. When Sun Man heard their story he punished the tribe by withholding rain - causing thirst, hunger and death. But the dogs - who had been the only friends the orphans had on earth - pleaded for rain to sustain the animals and flowers. Sun Man relented and sent the rain.

Now the stars, bunch together in the sky, as the Pleiades. Around them are hundreds of smaller stars (visible only through a telescope). These are their friends the dogs! Goble's illustrations and retelling are backed by research.

Gr. 1-4 American Indian

Activities: Older kids can search out stories from other cultures about the stars .

THE HONEY HUNTERS; A traditional African Tale told and illustrated by Francesca Martin. Candlewick Pr. 1992 ISBN 1-56402-086-X

In the Ngoni folktale the honeybird flies through the leafy forest and over the wide plains calling,

"Che, Che, Cheka, Che,
If you want honey follow me!"

She is followed by a Ngoni lad, then a cock, then a cat, then an antelope, leopard, zebra, lion and elephant. They are all friendly until the honey is found and the boy breaks the hive to share with all. Then the animals fight among each other - as they have done ever since! But the story ends hopefully, when the honey bird beckons again for the smaller animals and insects to follow her.

The colors in the illustrations reflect the greens of the forest and the yellows of the hot plains; against these are the authentic forms and colors of the animals, birds, insects and flowers. As illustrated the Ngoni boy could just as easily be a girl, which gives a nice non-sexist touch to this beautiful book.

THE RED THREAD by Ed Young author/illus. Philomel Bks. 1993

Ed Young's art is never trite, and these exquisite illustrations will foster careful observation. The red thread of the title runs through all the pages - most obviously in dividing the printed words, but more subtly throughout the pictures. The colors are luscious. They fill the pages in bold splashes reflecting the emotions or recede to reveal delicate outlines of crowded bazaars, opulent palaces, milling people, horses, soldiers - amongst which a careful reader can observe a young man who is looking for a wife.

Tradition said that, "this red thread links together a couples' feet when they are born." They will eventually marry the person to whom they are tied at birth. It is forecast that Wei will marry a girl who is at present only three years old, and lives in poverty. Wei refuses to accept this match as the girl is *ugly*! (Oh my! why this again?) He sends a servant to murder her.But she survives and later, when she is restored to her noble family he falls in love and marries her, not realising who she is.

Many of the pictures are too faint and detailed for class readaloud. However, older children will enjoy examining them.

Gr.1-3 Chinese

Gr. 1-3 African

Read also - *Bringing the The Rain to Kapiti Plain* /Aardema

Activities : Cumulative, participation, act-out story. Science - Animals of Africa.

VEJIGANTE MASQUERADER by Lulu Delacre author/artist Scholastic 1993 ISBN 0-590-45776-4

In February during the *vejigante* carnival in Puerto Rico people dress in colorful costumes,wear masks and carry inflated cow bladders (*vejigas*) that are painted.

Young Ramon desperately wants to be part of this celebration, and schemes to make a costume secretly and buy a mask. However, on the first day of the festival he is attacked by a goat, who tears his costume. He is despondent, but the old men respect his need to participate, and his mother mends his costume - so he can enjoy the festivities again.

This is a bilingual (Spanish) book . The illustrations are attractive and contemporary. Information on masquerade festivals in other Hispanic countries is included at the end of the book,along with illustrations and instructions for making masks.

Gr. 1-4 Latino

Activities - Mask making

I will write peace on your wings and you will fly all over the world.
- Sadako Sasaki*

Commentary ... Liberation Literature

In the Horn Book Magazine of Nov-Dec 1992 African American author, Virginia Hamilton defines a new genre for multicultural books - the 'literature of liberation'. The following thoughts and quotes are taken from it.

Liberation literature includes tales of freedom - whether fiction or non-fiction that "portray an individual's and a people's ..suffering and courage, and their growing awareness of self in the pursuit of freedom. [The books] document the evidence either through biography or reconstructed factual narration...[In them] the past and the present are revealed through the victim and us as one and the same..[They show how] fugitives from slavery , through acts of will and courage determined the outcome of their own lives."

In general, school textbooks have failed to give importance to the political impact of slavery and the courageous acts of individual slaves - men and women.

Now Hamilton and Haskins , with careful research, factual objectivity and easily understood prose, have substantiated the premise that black Americans through their own ingenuity, courage and intelligent planning have been involved , through the years, in gaining freedom for themselves and their race.

MANY THOUSAND GONE; African Americans from Slavery to Freedom by Virginia Hamilton, illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon Knopf 1993 ISBN 0-394-92873-3

The author structures her book around the personal stories of African Americans - both slave and free through the last 250 years. Each vignette is from 2-4 pages only, but includes dates, statistics and dialogue woven seamlessly into the historical pattern. The language of fiction gives warmth to the facts, and the dramatic black and white illustrations provide impact.

Besides providing new insights into familiar names, like Crispus Attucks, Sojourner Truth etc., Hamilton introduces many unknown faces. Gabriel Prosser planned an abortive rebellion in 1800. Jenny Slew successfully took her case on unlawful captivity all the way to the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Josiah Henson, a fugitive slave, had an audience with Queen Victoria. And there are more!

This book should be required reading for all students to eradicate the old images of disempowerment and instill self esteem and respect for the race.

Gr. 3-8+ African American
Curricular: Social Studies; US History.

GET ON BOARD; The Story of the Underground Railroad by Jim Haskins, Scholastic 1993 152p ISBN 0-590-45418-8

The printsize and writing style makes this book easy to read and comprehend. It is a chronological history of the Underground Railroad, illustrated with period black and white photographs and maps. It includes pictures and anecdotes about the Quaker and other white men and women who supported the "railroad" , but it gives importance to the courageous role played by free blacks and escaped slaves who also were 'stationmasters'.

The author reminds us that it was only the black men and women who made the dangerous journeys into slave territory to bring out those who wanted freedom badly enough to undertake the risks.

There is a good index, time line, and bibliography for further reading. Like Haskins' other excellent biographies on African Americans, this history gives new dignity to the black slave.

Gr. 5-8+ African American
Curricular: US History.

THE REAL MCCOY; THE LIFE OF AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN INVENTOR by Wendy Towle. Paintings by Wil Clay. Scholastic 1993 ISBN 0-590-43590-5

Children need successful role models, especially within their own culture. This biographical picture book tells the story of Elijah McCoy; born in 1844 as a free black in Canada. He was educated as an engineer in Scotland, but when he came to the US after the Civil War, he still found discrimination. and could only get a menial job on the railroads.

He used this circumstance to invent the automatic oil cup to grease the axles and bearings of the trains. It was so effective, that when imitations crept into the market, the engineers would declare they only wanted "the real McCoy".

In 1975 his home town of Detroit named a street after this black engineer and inventor.

The author is a teacher who developed this as a unit for her class. The illustrator is a black sculptor and painter.

Gr. 4-6
Curricular - Science - Research other black inventors and scientists.
Read also - ***A Long Hard Journey; The Story of the Pullman Porter*** by McKissack

A Boy becomes a Man...

SPARROW HAWK RED by Ben Mikaelsen Hyperion 1993 185p ISBN 1-56282-388-4

At first the reader may be put off by the flamboyant adventure but I feel that the author pulls it off.

Ricky Diaz can fly, although he is too young for a pilot's licence. His father, Benito, was a jet pilot, then in the US Drug Enforcement Agency, but he quit after his wife died. As the book opens the DEA wants him to go into Mexico and steal an airplane with sophisticated radar equipment from a drug cartel. Benito feels sure this cartel was responsible for his wife's death - and he refuses.

Ricky overhears the discussion and decides that he will avenge his mother's death. He runs away across the border, merges with the *ratero* [homeless children], experiences their hard life, and in this disguise is able to infiltrate the drug lord's compound. It's not fair to give away the rest of the story!

Mikaelson tells a gripping yarn. Once you are able to accept the premise that a teenager, who flies airplanes, is taking on a ruthless drug cartel by himself, you are drawn into the action. Ricky's life as a *ratero* is explored with empathy - the hunger, violence, humiliation, constant vigilance and abject poverty. A spunky ratero girl, Soledad, befriends him and adds humor and pathos with her pranks and her despair. He realises that street people actually work very hard all day, just at surviving!. The flying sequences are exhilarating and sure to please adventure seekers.

Is this a mainstream-multicultural novel? I think so. The characters and setting is noticeably Latino. Ricky and Soledad are courageous but human. The *ratero* culture is sympathetically introduced, with respect for the sheer hard work and understanding for the petty crime it takes to survive on the streets. But the sheer adventure of the plot is predominant. The final ruse to reach the heavily guarded airplane is very unusual, but will appeal to the humor of pubescent boys!

The author is not Latino but "spent some time among the homeless children of Mexico and also drew upon his own childhood experiences growing up in Bolivia." There are many Spanish words and phrases used, but skillfully integrated so that there is no need for a glossary. This book will sell itself - and happily appeal also to boys. The reader cannot help but feel admiration for the Latino hero, and sympathy for the *rateros* of Mexico.

Gr. 6-8+ Latino

Reviewed with Barbara Ross.

THE WALLS OF PEDRO GARCIA by Kevin McColley Delacrote Pr. 1993 ISBN 0-385-30806-X

Kevin McColley has drawn on his travels and experiences in the Caribbean and middle American countries to write this short but impressive first novel. The book presents a disturbing, mystical tale centered around Pedro and his *abuelo* (grandfather). Even though the orphaned boy is twelve years old, this unpredictable , coming-of-age story is more suitable for older teens because the underlying theme cuts deep.

Pedro and Miguel, his *abuelo*, live in a hut on the estate of Senor de Lupe, and serve him. The story revolves around the wall that the Senor is building around his estate. Pedro wants to protest against it. The wall also serves as a metaphor presented by the book - that the desire to be a man [control one's own destiny] is confronted by society's stubborn view of one's station and value in life. Pedro wishes to feel that his life matters - that he is special. His *abuelo* disapproves and tries to convince him, in a variety of ways,that pride in one's self is bad - that being a man means letting go of dreams and accepting the realities of one's life.

"You are not a boy, but that does not mean that you are a man" says the grandfather to Pedro.

The language is poetic, the dialogue sincere, and there is evident pride in the Latino heritage. The book offers no solutions but is an excellent catalyst for discussions on the essential worth of the underprivileged in a society where one's value is based on wealth.

Gr.8+ Latino

Activities: Compare with Sparrow Hawk Red / Mikaelsen

Reviewed with Rose Bocanegra

A BOY BECOMES A MAN AT WOUNDED KNEE by Ted Wood with Wanbli Numpa Afraid of Hawk Walker & Co 1992 42p ISBN 0-8027-8174-8

There should be more books like this - linking the heroic Indian of the past to the present people of this culture. This picture book presents the historical facts of the massacre at Wounded Knee Creek,(1890) then relates them to an eight year old Lakota boy who joins a group of about 200 Lakota horsemen in a commemorative ride that retraces the ill-fated trek of the Oglala people. The modern six-day journey, in sub-zero weather is difficult for the boy, but he knows it is to honor his forbears and to heal the past. This is his coming-of-age. Color photographs of this 1990 trip illustrate this very informative book.

Gr.2-5 American Indian

Curricular - Social Studies, US History

Leave 'Em Laughing!

THE RIGHTEOUS REVENGE OF ARTEMIS BONNER by Walter Dean Myers. HarperCollins 1993 144p ISBN 0060208465

This is Myers answer to Mark Twain - and it is great fun! It is in 1880 that the 15-year-old African American boy, one Artemis Bonner, sets out to find the man who shot down his uncle, Ugly Ned Bonner! Frolic, an American Indian boy joins him.The two of them embark on Extensive Journeys to find the gold that Ugly Ned Bonner had discovered, and to do Justice to his Killer, who is one Catfish Grimes, a black man of Fiendish Imagination.

The two adventurers make many Diabolical Plans to capture Catfish and his Lady - but to no avail! They travel all over the US including, Sacramento and up to Alaska. There is an ongoing balance of power between the two adversarial groups (for Catfish's Lady is almost as Reprehensible as he is!) Artemis gets the worst of many exploits, but he bounces back to execute even more Outlandish Punishments.

He and Frolic eventually end up home, without the treasure, but thankfully with their Lives.

This is Myers at his comic best, with his tongue firmly imbedded in his cheek.

It would make a delightful read aloud and will surely spur some spontaneous re-enactments (which, of course, should be supervised!!)
Gr. 5-8
Activities :- Readers Theatre . Dramatisation. Comparison with Huck Finn. Have small cooperative groups write episodes for a sequel - using the same writing style. Compile your class book. Research the black cowboy in history.

AUNT ELAINE DOES THE DANCE FROM SPAIN by Leah Komaiko, illustrated by Petra Mathers Doubleday 1992 ISBN 0-385-30674-1

Lilting rhyme, large pictures in primary colors peopled by sophisticated, but happy people of many complexions and centered around the oddities of an Aunty Mame character , make this a winner for the primary kids. Aunt Elaine is an attractive, unconventional, slightly ditsy lady who belongs to a Spanish dance club that is putting on a show. She takes her niece Katy to see it, but somehow, Katy ends up on stage with her aunt!

This delightful book is also cross cultural, providing a glossary of Spanish words along with the Yiddish phrase - *Oh vey* (oh brother!) which subtly shows what Katy's parents think of Aunt Elaine's antics!
Gr. K-3 Cross cultural
Activities: Get out the castanets, sew on the frills, learn a Spanish dance, give a show, invite Katy and me!

The following persons have been most generous in providing me books, advice, valuable discussion and reviews for this issue. **I thank them.**
Rose Bocanegra, Terry Chekon, Judy Green, Moonyene Lew, Nancy Ortiz Jackson, Barbara Ross, Ruth Seo

SEND FOR THESE:

The Children's Small Press Collection Catalog 719 N. Fourth Ave Ann Arbor, MI 48104
70p catalog of "hard to find, well-chosen books and music for tots to teens...Also resources for parents and professionals..." Includes a good amount of multicultural books from small presses, also books on self esteem, values clarification,etc.

List of books from **Polychrome Publishing Corporation.** 4509 North Francisco, Chicago, Illinois 60625
A new publishing house dedicated to producing Asian American children's stories.

AWAIR Catalog of materials and study units **Arab World and Islamic Resources** 2095 Rose St., Suite 4 Berkeley, CA 94709

HarperCollins announces that its **Center for Multicultural Children's Literature** is now accepting applications from talented writers and illustrators to be considered for participation in a new mentor program. There are over 40 multicultural authors and/or illustrators with established careers in children's literature who will act as mentors. To encourage these new writers they announce the HarperCollins **Multicultural Children's Book Awards** - three cash awards, and two grants. For further information and for applications **send a SASE** to:
Center for Multicultural Children's Literature, HarperCollins, 10 E. 53rd St, 30th Floor, New York, NY 10022

TALKING WALLS: ACTIVITY GUIDE by Margy Burns Knight and Thomas Chan 1992 $9.95
Tilbury House Pub.
132 Water St., Gardiner ME 04345

Good 65p guide of activities and units based on the book of the same title (reviewed in MIRROR, Fall '92]. The activities have been tested in K-9 classrooms by the authors

Goodbye.....Sayonara.....Adios Amigos
The World is Ours to Share